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POLL RESULTS

Do you think the ambience of a tropical island that tourists expect is adversely affected by the presence of the pre-positioning ships on our horizon?

Yes	33
No	96
Maybe	15
No opinion	5

Sunday, March 25, 2012

INSIDE

BUSINESS



Americans have pumped less gas every week for the past year.

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FOCUS



An Afghan father tries to cope with the death of his family after the shooting rampage.

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LIFE & STYLE



"The Hunger Games" has taken in \$68.25 million domestically in its first day, a record.

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Gold medalists in regional thespian to head for Nebraska. **PAGE 2**
Senate panel to ask OPA, OAG to further probe MPLT land purchase. **PAGE 5**

Mafnas allegedly interfered with probe into Romero slay

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Ramon C. Mafnas allegedly interfered with the investigation into the killing of bartender Emerita "Emie" Romero, shocking and puzzling his own police detectives.

» Petition circulates at DPS for Mafnas' removal
» More complaints surface

As this developed, *Saipan Tribune* learned that a well-supported petition has been circulating at the Department of Public Safety for the immediate removal of Mafnas.

Some people have also started surfacing, claiming that they were victims of the



Mafnas

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AS CNMI-ONLY VISA CATEGORY IS NEW

'CW visa application takes much longer than expected'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

What's supposed to be a few days' processing of a Commonwealth-only worker visa after an application interview at the U.S. Embassy in Manila took at least three weeks for J. Ariel L. Mariano, only the second foreign worker in the CNMI to apply for a CW visa in the Philippines.

It is not known whether the first person to apply for a CW visa in Manila got his CW visa just like Mariano had.

But the whole CW visa application process took a month, if one is to count from the date Mariano tried to make an online and phone-in schedule for an interview at the embassy in Manila on Feb. 6, four days after arriving there for a deposition related to a civil action filed in the CNMI.

Mariano is a senior paralegal officer at L&T Group of Companies where he has worked for almost 19 years.

He had his actual interview with a U.S. consul on Feb. 15, and picked up his passport with the CW visa in it on March 7.

Throughout that time, he had been following up online and on the phone. He also sought help from the U.S. Embassy in Manila and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"That's a total of 21 visa processing day by the embassy, from the interview on Feb. 15 and the

See CW on Page 4

FOR A CAUSE

Children enjoy the inflated playpen at the 26th Annual Red Cross Walkathon last Saturday. Walkers strolled along Beach Road from 4-H Building in Susupe to Garapan Fishing Base and back.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

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AT 36TH COVENANT DAY CELEBRATIONS:

Covenant Party endorses Kilili; Fitia! boosts GOP bets on Rota

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Political campaigns are starting to heat up eight months ahead of the Nov. 6 polls, with Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos and the Covenant Party endorsing Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's (Ind-MP) re-election on Saturday afternoon, followed hours later by Gov. Benigno R. Fitia!'s formal launching on Rota of former representative Victor Hocog's senatorial bid and Rep. Teresita Santos' re-election.

Both events were held on Covenant Day, which marked the 36th year of the signing of the document that made the Northern Marianas a part of the United States.

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Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, right, titular head of the Covenant Party, addresses a crowd during the political party's celebration of the 36th year of the signing of the Covenant that made the Northern Marianas a part of the United States at Minatchom Atdao in Susupe on Saturday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Local



Gold medal winners of the 2012 Regional Thespian Competition gather for a group photo during awarding rites Saturday night at Canton Restaurant. The 29-member CNMI Team will advance to the national competition in Lincoln, Nebraska in June. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

Gold medalists in regional thespian will head for Nebraska

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

A total of 29 students from mostly public secondary schools on island were named gold medalists in the 2012 Thespian Regional Competition and will officially represent the CNMI in the national tilt in Lincoln, Nebraska, in June.

Organized by the National Forensic League board, finalists vied for the chance to advance to the nationals during a whole-day competition on Saturday at Saipan Southern High School.

Contenders in the thespian regional event were the top performers in the contest categories during the first four preliminary rounds throughout the year, which were determined through accumulative points gained in every contest round. Since the beginning of the school year, hundreds of students have joined in these preliminary events.

In the junior thespian division, six students were named gold medalists in four categories. Four students from Hopwood Junior High School won first place awards: Mikhail Alcantara for monologue; Annabel Manzo for solo musical; and the team of Mary Jane Pepito and Stephanie Lumbad for mime. From Grace Christian Academy, gold winners were Angela Cruz and Alexa Go for duet acting.

From the senior division, the first place awardees were Saipan Southern High School's Chae Won Hwang for monologue; SSSH's Anna Rose Deleon Guerrero for solo musical; the Marianas High School team of Harold Aranda and Jorem Guardian for duet acting; and the SSSH team of Julius Innocencio and Raymar Denora for mime.

For the scenic design category, the overall winner was MHS' Dennis De Guia; MHS' Hannah Alcorido for costume design; SSSH's Annie Kim for marketing; and MHS' Salvi Villanueva for film.

The 13-member MHS Glee Club Rhythm N' Harmony was

hailed the regional competition's overall winner for group musical category. The group recently bagged the Sweepstakes Trophy at the Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam.

Harold Easton, chapter director for the Thespian Society in the Western Pacific Islands, said the first place winners in each contest category will comprise the CNMI Team that will go on to the thespian society festival. He described this year's delegation as extremely talented and has great potential to make it big in the nationals.

During the awarding ceremonies held at Canton Restaurant in Garapan, Easton emphasized the need for the group to stick with their practice sessions.

For Mikhail Alcantara, joining the thespian event helps him hone his skill and allows him to gain exciting experiences. Last year, Alcantara made it to the Top 6 in the nation for monologue—his first time to compete at the nationals.

"Hopefully I can better what I did last year so I can bring the first place award in the same category for the NMI," he told *Saipan Tribune*. This year marks his second time in the competition.

Anna Rose Deleon Guerrero, gold medalist for solo musical and monologue categories, said this will be her fifth time to go to the nationals and, as always, she's excited about the new experience. She vowed to work harder this time to better represent the CNMI.

"I've learned not to down myself based on other people so if you have our own strengths that no one else has, don't be afraid to shine with it because no two performers are exactly the same," she said.

Salvi Villanueva, gold recipient for film, also vowed to work extra hard on his entry. His *If Only* short film was adjudged the regional winner in his category. This will be his second time to represent the CNMI at the nationals.

Navy, Air Force training at FDM

The U.S. Navy and Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on the following dates and times:

- March 26, 27 and 28, from 6:30am to 11:59pm
- March 29 and 30, from 6:30am to 9:45pm
- March 31, from 6:30am to 10:30pm

The general public especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated. The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. (USN)

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Rejection of Alepuyo's re-appointment disappoints CUC

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Abe Utu Malae expressed disappointment yesterday with the Senate's decision on Wednesday to reject

the re-appointment of Viola Alepuyo to the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission.

Alepuyo was the commission's former chairperson and who, for many months, functioned as the sole regulator of utilities on the islands.

Bigger 'KONFITMA' exercise includes Tinian

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

This year the CNMI will see a bigger "KONFITMA," a full-scale all-hazard exercise to test the response capabilities of various agencies.

The third annual KONFITMA exercise will be between July 16 to 20 on Saipan and Tinian.

During the exercise, there will be seven targets on Saipan and one target on Tinian, according to Ray Toves, director of U.S. Army Pacific, Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support System Enhanced Response Force Package Training and Readiness Division.

Toves said there were only five targets last year—all on Saipan, and that they may include Rota next year in the exercise.

USARPAC, in coordination with the Office of Homeland Security and the Emergency Management Office, Office of the Governor, conducted an initial planning conference for this year's KONFITMA at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center on Capital Hill on Thursday. Several other government agencies from the CNMI, Guam, and federal government joined in the conference.

Toves said involved in the exercise are all response agencies that would respond to an incident of national significance if something happens in the CNMI.

Toves said this year's scenario will involve chemical release, biological release, radiological release, and explosives.

"Something that would disrupt the daily operations of the CNMI," he disclosed.

Last year's scenario was a hijacked boat that caused chemical emissions at Charlie Dock; an explosion that triggered a fire and collapsed a structure in Kagman; a gas leak at a water reservoir on Navy Hill; and a hostage taking and food poisoning at Hopwood Junior High School.

"I am disappointed because it is difficult getting people to serve as a commissioner on the CPUC. For one thing, it is a complex and time consuming job that calls for the services of a true public servant," Malae told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that a CPUC commissioner volunteers to protect the interest of consumers as well as ensure the viability and good behavior of monopolies or near monopolies.

Alepuyo's re-appointment was rejected for what many believe to be in retaliation against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, whose remark describing Tinian and Rota senators as "stupid" for rejecting a bill that would have allowed casino gaming on Saipan irked

these senators.

Although there are two new appointees to the commission, both have yet to be confirmed, which means the CPUC remains "nonfunctioning."

Malae said the absence of a commission will put a damper on the Renewable Portfolio Standards effort of CUC. "We are fortunately working closely with the Attorney General's Office and the lieutenant governor to ensure that this important endeavor continues to progress," he said, adding that CUC looks forward to the nomination and confirmation of new members.

Malae said that CUC continues to lobby for the passage of MFAC bill, which will allow the utility firm to adjust the fuel

component of its billing each month instead of the current practice of every six months.

"One of the reasons we pushed for a monthly fuel adjustment rather than six-month LEAC [levelized energy adjustment clause] was for situations where a CPUC lacked quorum such as at present. That 'monthly fuel adjustment' bill was passed by the Senate but did not make it past the House last year," said Malae.

"We are continuing with the LEAC of course but continue to demonstrate that the MFAC is in the consumer's best interest," he added.

Without a functioning commission, changes in CUC's rates would only be possible through legislation and an ex-

ecutive order from the governor in case of emergencies.

CUC earlier said that the LEAC model has a high level of complexity that saddles ratepayers with significant costs. It was learned that because of LEAC's complexity, CUC and the commission have engaged in numerous contentious disputes over the model's findings.

The MFAC, according to CUC, is based on a new and far less complex methodology. Because it is to be calculated each month based on estimates of electric usage and fuel prices, the calculation will also include a "true-up" of actual revenue collected through the MFAC versus actual fuel expenses incurred by CUC.

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MAFNAS

From Page 1

commissioner's alleged abuse of power and bullying.

According to a document obtained by *Saipan Tribune*, Police Capt. Lawrence M. Camacho, chief of DPS Criminal Investigation Bureau, learned from detectives that Mafnas was jeopardizing the investigation into the killing of Romero.

Camacho notified chief prosecutor Peter Prestley in a letter dated Feb. 9, 2012, about Mafnas' questionable actions in the Romero case.

The incident happened when Camacho held a briefing on Feb. 7, 2012, with Mafnas, deputy commissioner Ambrosio Ogumoro, Police director Aniceto Ogumoro, Capt. Pete Leon Guerrero, and Sgt. Tom Blas regarding the latest information in the Romero case.

As Camacho was starting with his briefing, focusing on the interview with the key witness, Mafnas allegedly interrupted him to tell him that what the investigators told him (Camacho) was a lie and that the investigators should re-interview the witness.

Mafnas stated that he had spoken to the key witness and that she had told him information that contradict what she earlier told the investigators. Mafnas then began telling everyone in the room of his interview with the key witness.

This prompted Camacho to tell the commissioner that he needs to turn in a self-statement of his interview with the key witness. Camacho explained that the discovery rule has to be satisfied, especially if it contradicts what investigators had already provided a statement on.

Mafnas replied that he did not owe Camacho a "goddamn statement!"

The CIB chief informed Mafnas that he needed to back off and let the investigators do their job as he was jeopardizing the investigation.

Camacho explained that during the investigators' canvass of the area in Garapan where Romero was last seen alive, a couple of his investigators visited an establishment for an interview.

The individual at the establishment was reluctant to give any statement to

investigators because a "gray-haired individual" (referring to Mafnas) came in already, claiming that he was the "boss of the police" and already took his statement.

The investigators were shocked and puzzled, but Camacho told them not to worry about it as he will ask Mafnas for a self-statement.

Camacho told Mafnas that he needs to submit two statements because he had already gotten himself involved in the investigation, most especially about the key witness.

Mafnas repeated himself that he did not owe Camacho a "goddamn statement!"

The Office of the Attorney General has yet to issue a statement about Camacho's letter to chief prosecutor Prestley.

Last Friday, *Saipan Tribune* broke the story about complaints that Mafnas allegedly threatened to arrest, handcuff, and shoot two Filipino security guards and a Korean dive instructor in separate incidents in Marpi.

In response, Mafnas said he welcomes an independent investigation by federal and CNMI authorities. Mafnas said the allegations are the products of

individuals with ulterior motives to fulfill their selfish agenda.

With respect to the Romero investigation issue, Mafnas said there is absolutely no substance or evidence to support the allegation that he deliberately interfered with the Romero case investigation.

He blamed three to four "sore" senior officers at DPS of being behind these allegations. He did not name these senior officers.

Meanwhile, *Saipan Tribune* learned from sources that several DPS personnel have signed a petition for the ouster of Mafnas. Several Tinian and Rota DPS personnel also joined in the petition.

The petition, sources said, cited many alleged abuses of Mafnas and unprofessional conduct, among other things. The petition is expected to be submitted to Gov. Benigno Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos this week.

Saipan Tribune also has continued receiving several emails and calls from people, mostly motorists and alien workers, who complain about Mafnas' alleged abuse of power and bullying and allegations of him tailing them without cause and confiscating their driver's licenses.

ON COMPLAINTS VS MAFNAS

'We're taking this matter seriously'

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos said Saturday that he and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial have yet to talk to Department of Public Safety Commissioner Ray Mafnas about complaints of abuse of his power, as well as about a reported petition by DPS employees for his ouster. But he said the Fitial administration is taking this matter seriously.

Inos said the administration, as of Saturday, had yet to see actual copies of the complaint and the petition. He said the administration can't do anything until it has all the facts and all concerned are heard.

"We're taking this matter seriously. I'm taking it seriously because the worst that can happen to DPS, when you bring the morale down to the ground, you don't have a civilian-police force. Everyone will be on their own, that's not the way it's supposed to be," he told reporters at a Covenant Party gathering on Saturday.

He said Mafnas spoke to him a few days ago and agreed to talk again "to resolve this and get this distraction out the way because we've got important mission down at DPS."

"I haven't discussed anything with the governor as yet. I don't know that Mr. Mafnas has communicated with the governor... I heard those concerns from the community and it's only fair that we sit down and talk to Mr. Mafnas," he said.

Inos said regardless of the outcome of a meeting between the governor, him, and Mafnas, "we need to bring stability to DPS. Very important."

He said if the complaints against Mafnas suggest criminal action, then the administration will allow the process to take its course.

"But if it's an administrative thing, that's something that the governor can resolve with Mr. Mafnas," he added. *(Haidee V. Eugenio)*

Other candidates

Covenant Party officials led by Inos, Babauta, precinct chairs Felipe Atalig and Jack S. Aguon also launched the candidacy of former representative Ana S. Teregeyo for a Senate seat representing Saipan.

Teregeyo is so far the fourth known individual vying for Saipan's senatorial seat. The three others are incumbent Sen. Luis Crisostimo, an independent now running under Fitial's Republican Party; Rep. Ray Yumul, a Republican who will run as independent; and newcomer Illuminanda Reyes Bermudes, also running independent.

The Covenant Party also announced its Precinct 2 and 3 candidates in the Nov. 6 midterm elections.

The Covenant Party's Precinct 2 candidates are incumbent Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) and John Paul "JP" Sablan.

For Precinct 3, the Covenant Party's candidates are incumbent Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), and Bryan S. Torres, the Public School System's mathematics program coordinator.

Inos said the party has yet to finalize their list of candidates.

The Covenant Party and so-called "Independent Republicans" have been

CW

From Page 1

day I picked up my passport on March 7," Mariano told *Saipan Tribune* on Saturday.

Mariano said despite the discomfort of going through a lengthy process, he's thankful that it all worked out in the end.

He said he understands that because the CW category is a new one, it will take time to implement the system in a speedy and efficient manner.

The CW visa category was created pursuant to U.S. Public Law 110-229 signed in May 2008, which placed CNMI immigration under federal control effective Nov. 28, 2009. The regulations were published only in September 2011 for a number of reasons.

"Hopefully, the State Department, and USCIS, can improve the system as time goes on," Mariano added.

His advice to those who will apply for a CW visa is to "plan ahead" and "be prepared" for anything that could happen along the way.

"If one is not prepared financially, for example, it will create a lot of problems. If your employer is not aware of the process and the reasons why you can't go back to the CNMI right away, that will also be a problem because your job may be in jeopardy," he said.

Mariano said because he was only the second person to apply for a CW visa in Manila, he felt as though he's part of an experiment on how the new process needs to be.

CW visa

Foreign workers in the CNMI who wish to re-enter the Commonwealth after a vacation in a non-U.S. area, for example, need to secure a CW visa at a U.S. embassy.

A CW visa is solely for people who have been approved a CW status and will be valid until Dec. 31, 2014, when the transition to federal immigration system period ends.

But each CW-1 visa has to be renewed every year and only until 2014, unless the transition period is extended.

The transitional visa is "valid only for entrance into the CNMI."

"Visa holders cannot use these visas to travel to or work anywhere else in

the United States. However, Filipino transitional workers will be allowed to transit through Guam to the CNMI on their visa," the U.S. Embassy in Manila said on its website.

The U.S. Embassy in Manila is so far the only one among Asian countries that is now providing application services for CW-1 and CW-2 visa applications for a fee of \$150 each.

Difficulties

Mariano shared the difficulties he faced while applying for a CW visa in February, although since then, some improvements and changes have been made to make the application process easier and faster.

He said the problem areas covered the operations of third-party service providers on fee payment and phone-in scheduling of interview, besides the extended period to issue the CW visa.

At the time of his application, he said the bank teller at the Bank of the Philippine Islands required presentation of original passport. The payment was also not immediately processed because a CW visa category was not yet in the bank's account system.

By mid-March, however, some BPI branches in Manila started accepting payments with only scanned copies of passport.

Also at the time of his CW visa application, there was still no CW visa in the selection for online and phone-in schedule reservation.

A few weeks later, the U.S. Embassy in Manila's website posted a special section on the CW visa titled "Saipan-CNMI visa" under Nonimmigrant Visas.

Mariano said he emailed the U.S. Embassy in Manila for direction to schedule his appointment on Feb. 6. Three days later, he received a call informing him that he can now make a schedule by phone.

He said he was interviewed by a U.S. consul on Feb. 15.

Mariano said after the interview, the consul explained to him that there is no problem with his CW visa application and supporting documents.

However, a so-called 221(g) letter from the U.S. Embassy had to be issued because the CW visa is a new category that requires further administrative processing.

COVENANT

From Page 1

Sablan said he welcomes the "good news" about Inos and the Covenant Party's endorsement of him. Sablan is the CNMI's first and so far only non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives.

"I am just as grateful to Lieutenant Governor Inos and the Covenant Party's members for their support of my candidacy. I remain completely committed to continue to work hard in Congress for all our people and our islands," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* via email.

Inos, the titular head of the Covenant Party, said they endorsed Sablan's candidacy for "many reasons," including the delegate's focus on and consistency in ensuring that the needs of CNMI people are addressed.

"He follows through on issues. We believe that he will continue to do that regardless of the political landscape in Washington, D.C.," Inos said in an interview at the Minatchom Atdao where they celebrated Covenant Day on Saturday.

Secondly, he said, the political season has commenced but they haven't

heard of any other individual who might be interested in vying for the delegate post. Fitial's Republican Party has not made any announcement of their delegate bet; the same goes with the Democratic Party.

"For that reason, the executive committee has recommended that [we] endorse U.S. Delegate Kilili. He's doing a good job," Inos said. "It's not that we don't want to fix something that's not broken. He's doing a good job. We want to put him back there so he could do a much better job."

The Covenant Party invited Sablan's wife, Andrea, to Saturday's gathering and to accept the party's official endorsement of the delegate candidate.

Oscar M. Babauta, Covenant Party campaign chairman and advisor, and other party officials said they were thankful for the big crowd on Saturday despite the fact that there were other major events happening that day.

Fitial founded the Covenant Party 11 years ago to support his gubernatorial bid. He left the party in 2011 to rejoin the Republican Party, which he now chairs again. While others followed the governor to the Republican Party, others like his running mate Inos remained with the Covenant Party.

trying to complement each other's list of candidates to build a formidable alliance against the governor's GOP, sources from both camps said. The "Independent Republicans" consist of long-time Republicans who did not want Fitial to lead the party that they said the governor "abandoned" for his personal agenda.

The Covenant Party also re-elected all its officers led by chairman Gregorio "Kazuma" Camacho, who was off island during the weekend for medical reasons. The other retained officers are: first vice chair John Waboli; second vice chair Martin Sablan; secretary Mariam Seman; and treasurer Emma Villagomez.

Fitial on Rota

Fitial went to Rota over the weekend to officially kick off the Hocog-Santos campaign.

The event held in Sinapalo drew a large crowd, said sources that were at the GOP event. The crowd estimate, however, ranged from 200 to 600, depending on who one asks.

The governor and his close associates, including businessman Joe Li-foi, Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Arnold Palacios, and Juan Reyes, chartered a flight to Rota on Friday, according to sources.

Fitial has taken a more aggressive role in campaigning for Hocog's candidacy, in particular, as Hocog is challenging Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), with whom the governor has been having a nasty word war.

Manglona is seeking a third term as senator representing Rota.

In a phone interview yesterday, Manglona said he was earlier invited by Fitial's supporters to run under the Republican Party, but that he declined the invitation for two main reasons.

"First, I cannot answer to the people of Rota and the CNMI about the failures of Fitial in addressing the economy, Retirement Fund, the hospital, food stamp, capital improvement projects and utilities, and other issues. He has no plan for economic recovery other than casinos," Manglona told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said the second reason is that he is committed to supporting and endorsing Sablan as a delegate candidate.

Fitial has yet to name a Republican candidate for delegate.

Santos, meanwhile, said yesterday that the "overwhelming support" from people encouraged her to seek re-election.

Santos also described Hocog as "an outstanding citizen" and who can also lead Rota during these tough times.

Senate panel to ask OPA, OAG to further probe MPLT land purchase

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations chair Frank Cruz (R-Tinian) said his panel is poised to ask both the Office of the Public Auditor and the Office of the Attorney General to investigate further the Marianas Public Land Trust's purchase of private land on Capital Hill despite the availability of public lands.

"The EAGI Committee would like OPA and the AG's Office to do a follow-up investigation, in addition to what we are doing now to determine whether there were improprieties in the buying of private land even though there are lots of available public lands. MPLT spent \$272,000 on that property," Cruz told *Saipan Tribune* on Friday afternoon.

The Senate EAGI asked 13 set of questions and documents from MPLT related to the private land purchase. Cruz said he has yet to review the documents submitted.

The Senate separately re-

Rota, Tinian budget still at over \$4M each

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

The Fitial administration is still proposing over \$4 million each for Rota and Tinian for fiscal year 2013, even as some members of the House leadership want the governor to give these two islands only the amount they generate, which is some \$2 million a year.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, who oversees government finances, said as far as the Fitial administration is concerned, the Rota and Tinian budget will remain almost the same as in the previous fiscal year because they are still looking at a \$102 million CNMI budget for operations.

The administration has less than a week to submit its fiscal year 2013 budget to the Legislature.

Inos said the administration will beat the April 1 deadline, as it always does.

"We're on the final balancing stage. We are still bringing it down to \$102 million. Right now it's about \$112 million," he said. This means the administration has to further trim the budget requests by \$10 million.

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) and other members of

jected the re-appointments of Alvaro Santos and Gregoria Fitial-Omar to serve on the MPLT board over their decision to buy the private land in question.

Cruz said the Senate EAGI Committee recommended Santos' rejection because the panel thinks Santos failed to do his fiduciary responsibility when the MPLT board, under his tenure as chairman, bought the private land.

He said the investigation that the panel is conducting now is separate from the investigation they did earlier that led to their recommendation to the full Senate to reject Santos' re-appointment.

"The reason why we acted on Santos and Fitial-Omar's re-appointments separately is that we wanted to make sure whether Fitial-Omar was also involved in the purchase of private property. I was about to vote for her re-appointment but we later found out she was involved so we also recommended her re-appointment's rejection. In these hard times, why would an agency like MPLT buy private

the House leadership still disappointed with the Senate's rejection of a House bill legalizing casino gaming on Saipan, have been considering cutting Rota and Tinian's budget equivalent to the amount they generate. But Inos said this is "pushing a bit too hard," and called on elected leaders to work together instead of working against each other.

House Ways and Means Committee chair Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan) said if it is the will of the majority to cut Rota and Tinian budget, then he will support it.

Basa, however, said the Legislature could also cut its budget in fiscal year 2013 and give more to other programs. The areas where they could cut, he said, are the leadership budget and the lawmakers' discretionary or operational account.

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) said any proposal to cut Rota and Tinian budgets is an attempt to bring back "the politics of the past" wherein leaders from Saipan, Tinian and Rota fight with each other.

"I hope people can see past this and work toward unity," he added.

property for its office building when it could take advantage of public property?" Cruz added.

Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan) had accused the EAGI Committee as well as the senators who rejected Santos and Fitial-Omar's re-appointments of singling out nominees from Saipan when it comes to rejecting Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's appointments.

Reyes accused Rota and Tinian senators of exacting revenge against the governor over his controversial remark describing Rota and Tinian senators as "stupid" for rejecting a House bill legalizing casino gaming on Saipan.

Cruz reiterated that his committee's recommendations were based on findings that Santos and Fitial-Omar failed to do their fiduciary duties. Fitial-Omar is the governor's younger sister, while Santos is a known Fitial supporter.

In a two-page committee report, the EAGI panel said when it was furnished a copy of an MPLT check for the purchase of the private property in question, the committee determined that Fitial-Omar "is equally responsible" for the decision to buy the land.

The panel said the MPLT board had given prior approval for Santos to find a suitable property upon which to build an MPLT office building. However, the board no longer had a quorum to approve and finalize the preliminary findings of Santos and Fitial-Omar at the time of the purchase. The committee said as a result, their actions were null and void and without legal authority as the board did not have quorum.

"With the abundance of available public land, which could have been obtained by MPLT at

no cost, just like other government agencies, the decision by Mr. Santos and Ms. Fitial-Omar was unjustified and indefensible. This is an absolute breach of their fiduciary duty," the panel said.

The EAGI Committee said it

continues to review the entirety of the land purchase separate and apart from the confirmation report to determine if this matter necessitates further review by OPA or the OAG.

Besides Santos and Fitial-Omar, the Senate also recently

rejected the re-appointment of Viola Alepuyo to serve another term on the Public Utilities Commission. Another of the governor's nominee and supporter, Sixto Igisomar, is on the verge of Senate rejection. All these nominees are from Saipan.

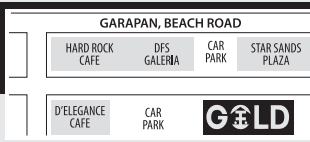
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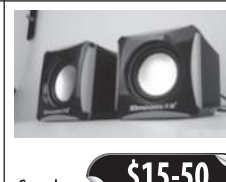
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Red Cross Walkathon still a big crowd drawer year in, year out

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

They began arriving in pairs or groups as early as 5am, equipped with small towels, caps or sun visors, and water bottles. The minute the sun's first rays peeked through the clouds, walkers standing in line for the 26th Annual Red Cross Walkathon last Saturday began strolling along Beach Road from 4-H Building in Susupe to Garapan Fishing Base and back.

At least several hundreds of community members of different age groups and nationalities took part in the annual event that aims to raise funds in support of the humanitarian mission of the American Red Cross NMI Chapter.

Saturday's walkers received a shirt and were entitled to refreshments from Subway and

Foremost for a \$15 donation to the premier emergency response organization led by volunteers. The walkers had a few stops to their destination, including those manned by volunteers from Bank of Hawaii, Powderade drink, and MDX Club.

At the Garapan Fishing Base where Western Union set up its tent, walkers eagerly lined up for a chance to receive gift items such as fans and shopping bags.

Amid the economic difficulties, the public continues to support the biggest walkathon event of the year. Maria Salinas, who donated \$15 without walking, says it's about doing something for a good cause.

"They do a lot of good things for everybody," said Salinas. "They help other people. So this donation is just a small thing that we can do to help Red Cross in their mission."

San Roque resident Connie Lizama, who arrived for the walkathon at 6:30am, agrees. "It was pretty hard to get pledges from family and friends. But each year, we still come out and support the Red Cross Walkathon and have a good time at the event."

Lizama's children, 10-year-old Joe Randy Tudela and 5-year-old Roquel Tudela, both attend Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School. Joe Randy, Lizama said, always gets excited every time the school hands out the walkathon form at their school.

"I used to just bring my son here but now that my daughter is of age, we all go together. It's a great activity for the entire family," added Lizama.

Gina Manahan, who lives in Fina Sisu, said she's currently jobless yet still arrived at the



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Children check out the animals featured at the mini-petting zoo at the 26th Annual Red Cross Walkathon last Saturday.

venue in time for the 6am walk. Manahan was joined by her daughter Gia Kamille and some of her friends and neighbors.

"You get to have fun and help a good cause at the same time," she added.

A Garapan resident said this was her second year of bringing along her husband and two children to the event. "I usually miss it because of work but when I can, I participate in the walk. It's our way of helping Red Cross."

Walkers were treated to different activities at the registration venue by the 4-H Building. Among them were face paint-

ing, a petting zoo, various game booths, and free blood pressure checkup. Information booths were also set up by a number of government agencies and non-profit organizations.

Red Cross NMI executive director John Hirsh said that they owe the great turnout to about 150 volunteers, walkers, the Public School System management and schools, private schools, sponsors and donors.

"We're just always humbled by the community's support. Year in and year out, people really value the Red Cross and they value this walkathon... We're just very grateful for their unwavering sup-

port," said Hirsh.

To promote transparency and accountability, Hirsh said Bank of Guam officials and staff will tally the money raised last Saturday.

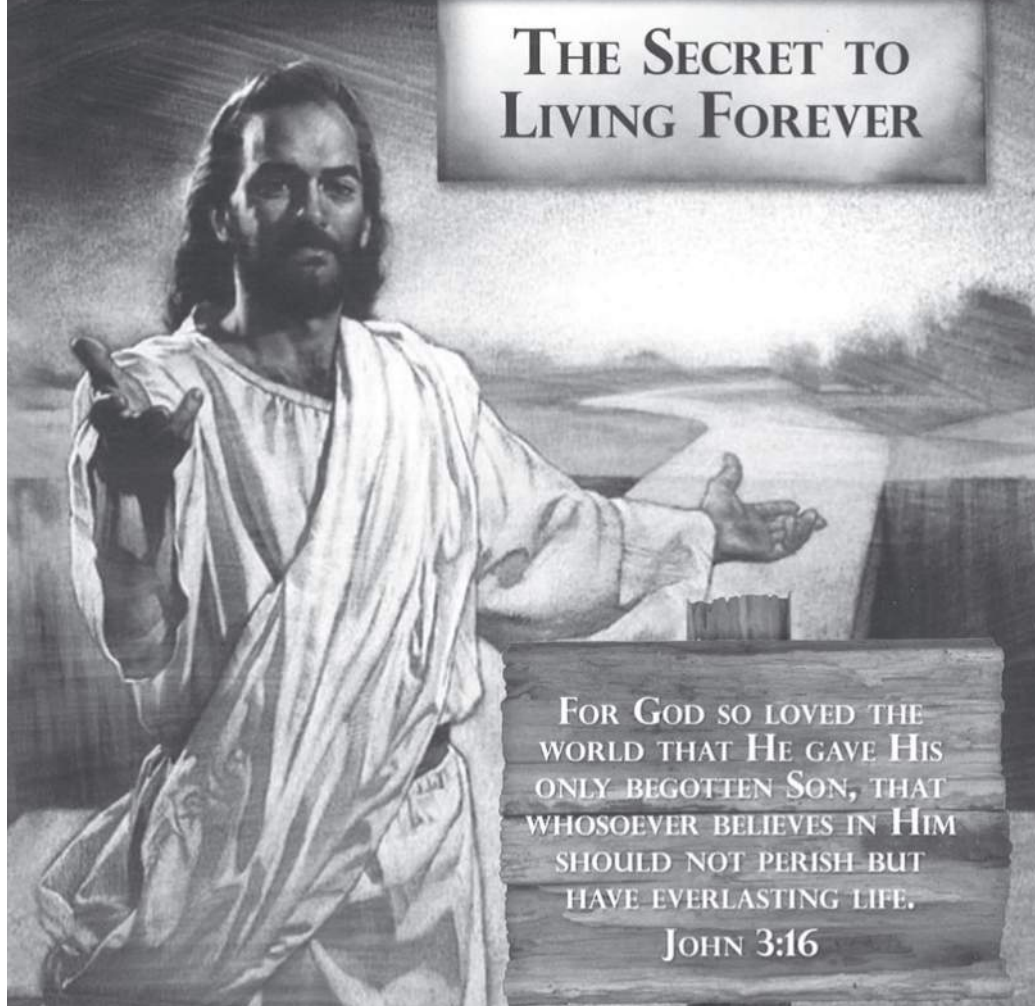
Although the funds raised are not earmarked for any specific project, Hirsh noted that a portion of the proceeds will go toward their efforts to develop their youth clubs at different high schools.

"We have four established clubs now and we're doing a lot more activities around the youth, focusing on what interests them and how they can support the Red Cross," he said.

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-12-009

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF WATER DIVISION ANNUAL MATERIALS

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Supply and Delivery of Water Division Annual Materials for Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Bid Package may be obtained, upon receipt of a non-refundable payment from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one set; at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

CUC may award a contract to more than one firm for the materials based on bids for "Commodity Groups".

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-12-009, Supply & Delivery of Water Division Annual Materials", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **April 4, 2012 at 10:00 AM, (ChST)** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract.

The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods.

Bidders will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions with regards to CUC-RFP-12-009 must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on **March 19, 2012** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Joel Hoepner, CUC Water/Wastewater Division Engineer via email joel.hoepner@cucgov.org and Janina Muna, CUC Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director

Miah's sentencing postponed again due to his new case

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court postponed anew the scheduled sentencing on Friday of Mohammad Jahangir Miah in the wake of new charges filed against him for alleged involvement in a scam involving the cashing of fraudulent CNMI tax refund checks in grocery stores.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona on Friday postponed Miah's sentencing after the U.S. government asked the

court to declare Miah in breach of a plea agreement that he entered in connection with the driver's license scam case.

This is the sixth time that Miah's sentencing has been postponed, according to court records.

Manglona set an evidentiary hearing on the prosecution's motion on Thursday at 1:30pm.

The judge also noted that Miah should get a conflict-free counsel because of the new case and appointed attorney Colin Thompson for that role.

Attorney Joseph Horey withdrew as Miah's counsel in the new case. After the hearing on Friday, Horey also withdrew as his counsel in the driver's license scam case.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth R. Backe said the plea agreement that Miah entered with the U.S. government in August last year expressly states that, if he "engages in criminal conduct after the entry of his plea agreement and before sentencing," the government would then "be free from its obligations under the agreement."

Backe said that Miah, on the other hand, would remain "guilty of the matters to which he had pled pursuant

to this agreement."

The prosecutor said that the U.S. government officially notifies both Miah and the court of its position that Miah has engaged in criminal conduct, breaching the agreement.

Miah, through Horey, objected to Backe's motions. The defense counsel said the issues of the new case play no part in the sentencing. Horey said it is the U.S. government that breached the plea agreement.

"The plea agreement provides that certain consequences may result if he [Miah] commits another crime, but nowhere in it does he promise not to commit one," Horey said.

By contrast, the defense lawyer said, the U.S. govern-

ment is in breach of the plea agreement by its endorsement of recommendations of the U.S. Probation Office.

Horey said the government is committed under the plea agreement in the old case to make a recommendation of "no upward departures of any kind under the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines."

Horey said the U.S. Probation Office's presentence investigation report made a recommendation contrary to this, recommending an upward departure for inadequate criminal history.

Horey said the government's response, by contrast, was to state that it has no objection to the presentence

investigation report.

"This amounts to an endorsement of Probation's position, which is contrary to the plea agreement, and is thus a breach," he pointed out.

On Aug. 19, 2011, Miah, one of the five suspects in a driver's license scam at the Department of Public Safety, pleaded guilty in federal court to a count of conspiring to unlawfully produce and transfer identification documents. He was placed on home confinement pending his sentencing.

Last Monday, FBI agents arrested Miah after the U.S. government filed a criminal complaint charging him with conspiracy to commit bank fraud.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Buon compleanno to Adeleyah Mojica, who is studying in Firenze, Italia. Cento di questi giorni! We love and miss you Addy! Love, Teen Talk.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Edwin L. Correa Jr., who had an impromptu birthday celebration at the Hark Rock Cafe. Thank you to the hardworking and rocking staff of Hard Rock. Love, Teen Talk.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 18th birthday to KHS Ayuyu and Teen Talker, Mark King. Love, Teen Talk.




CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy 2nd birthday to Rheanna Faith Agulto Delos Reyes, who celebrated her special day on March 27, 2012! Love, Mommy, Daddy. and the family.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Advanced happy birthday to Ashley "Rocco H. Cullen" Roberto, who will be celebrating her special day on March 28! Love, Teen Talk.



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MARY GRACE TIGLAO
of Saipan Community School

8th PLACE
MICHELLE BERMUDES
of William S. Reyes Elementary

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PUTRA SANI
of Oleai Elementary





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**INVITATION TO BID
ITB12-GOV-055
Roof Repair & Coating for Six Government Buildings
In Capitol Hill**

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, are soliciting sealed bids for the Roof Repair & Coating for Six Government Buildings in Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project package will be available Tuesday, March 20, 2012 at the Governor's CIP Administrator's Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill. A \$25.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001. Public Law 15-95 Local Preference Act, as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be Pre-bid Conference/Site Visit for this project on April 5, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. at the CIP Office. Bidders are encouraged to visit the site to familiarize themselves with the site conditions prior to submitting their bid. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on April 10, 2012 to Ms. Elizabeth Balajadia of the Capital Improvement Program, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or faxed to (670) 664-2408.

Sealed bids must be marked **"ITB12-GOV-055"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. Saipan local time, April 23, 2012. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than April 23, 2012 and must be received no later than May 3, 2012. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. Saipan local time, May 7, 2012. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:30 a.m. Saipan local time, on April 23, 2012.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid bond of fifteen percent (15 %) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be a Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". Surety companies must hold a certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the CNMI Attorney General.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price. The security company providing the Performance and Payment bonds must be U.S. Treasury listed and possess unencumbered assets equal to the penal amount of each bond. Performance time for completion of this project is sixty (60) calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be greater of (i) two hundred dollars (\$200.00), or (ii) two percent (2%) of the contract price divided by sixty (60) calendar days, the contract time and will be assessed as delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ ELOY S. INOS, Lieutenant Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Procurement and Supply, DOF

Rota mayor settles suit over alleged crop damage

The couple suing Rota Mayor Melchor A. Mendiola and several other government employees for allegedly invading and destroying their crops and plants at the Sabana Protected Areas have reached a settlement agreement.

Attorney Ramon K. Quichocho, counsel for plaintiffs Nurul Islam Paeda and Elizabeth Atalig Paeda, and attorney Joaquin DLG. Torres, counsel for Mendiola and co-defendants, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to dismiss the lawsuit.

The parties, however, asked the court to retain jurisdiction to enforce the settlement agreement, dated Feb. 28, 2012.

Each party agreed to bear their own costs and attorneys' fees.

The parties also agreed to dismiss from the case Mayor Mendiola's co-defendants, David M. Calvo, Brian M. Mendiola, Harry M. Mendiola, Francisco L. Mesngon, Michael B. Manglona, Benedicto M. San Nicolas, and 10 unnamed defendants.

The parties stipulated that these co-defendants be substituted by the Municipality of Rota, which will assume all obligations of the dismissed defendants.

The Paeda couple filed the lawsuit in May 2011. They sued the defendants for conspiracy to deprive them of property, deprivation of property, and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

In their complaint, the Paedas asked the court to issue a mandatory injunction to order the defendants to immediately cease and desist from harassing or bothering them, or stealing or destroying their properties.

Quichocho said that since 1991, the Paedas have been farming at the Sabana Protected Areas. Besides being a protected area, the Sabana is also designated for farming activities, under the supervision of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

Quichocho said that, sometime in 2010, Mendiola and certain defendants ordered that the soil cultivation and water supply provided by the government to the farmers be stopped at a certain area of the Paeda's Sabana farm. As a result, Mr. Paeda was forced to downsize his farm operation.

Quichocho said that, on Jan. 21, 2011, the defendants bulldozed the plaintiffs' crops and opened at least four undesignated right of ways through the couple's farm. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 26, 2001

Inos vows serious education reforms

After weeks of deep soul-searching, Education Commissioner Rita H. Inos landed on a decision that supporters believe would change the face of accessible education in the Commonwealth. Announcing her bid to join the race as deputy to gubernatorial hopeful Speaker Benigno R. Fitial, the incumbent Public School System administrator officially pledged her support to the Covenant Party, upholding the education agenda as one of the forefront in the party's campaign. "One thing that made me really think about Speaker Fitial's request is when he said that he regards education as a critical element in the Commonwealth's growth, along with economic development as his main concern and concentration. He never disregarded education as any lesser in the platform. I feel very proud and honored to join the team," said Dr. Inos.

Dynasty asks Continental to fly Saipan-Taipei route

Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino is tapping the assistance of Continental Micronesia to serve the Saipan-Taipei route temporarily abandoned by Mandarin Airlines. From the time its charter agreement with Mandarin Air expired late last year, Tinian Dynasty has been asking Continental to ferry Taiwanese visitors to the Northern Marianas. Hotel General Manager Tom Liu said Tinian Dynasty management has been negotiating with Continental since the beginning of the month, in fresh efforts to entice the carrier to fly CNMI-bound tourists from Taiwan.

Mar. 26, 2002

BOR evaluates Sablan

Board of Regents Chair Fermin Atalig pledged the entire BOR's involvement in the performance evaluation of Northern Marianas College president Joaquin Sablan, whose contract is expiring in the month's end. "Like PSS, it's that time of the year when we are evaluating the president and we are involving the whole board, not just one or two," disclosed Atalig in an interview over the weekend. The BOR chief added that every regent's input in the evaluation is necessary to ensure fairness in the process.

Bill boosting enforcement divisions goes to Senate

A bill that would exempt the enforcement units of three government agencies from the restrictions on the use of government cars is now on its way to the Senate after it passed the House of Representatives on Thursday last week. House Bill 13-29, authored by Vice Speaker Manuel A. Tenorio, sailed through the lower chamber on first and final reading. It essentially allows the enforcement divisions of the Division of Labor and Immigration, the Division of Alcohol, Beverage and Tobacco Control, and the Office of the Public Auditor to use unmarked vehicles with tinted windows in carrying out investigations.

Mar. 26, 2003

\$500K federal grant identified for private schools

The Public School System has identified some \$500,000 in federal grants to be allocated to some private schools, following negotiations with authorities. According to PSS federal program officer William P. Matson, the amount is part of the \$2.6 million Consolidated funds under Title 6. He said the fund would be removed from Title 6 to Title 5, which allows for private school participation. Public schools would use Title 5 funds amounting to \$2.1 million for a single activity-class-size reduction-while private schools will get some \$500,000 "for allocation according to the number of 5-17 year old students of their students."

House panel readies to move on with privatization bill for GHLI

The House Committee on Health and Welfare is rushing to dispose of the government health insurance privatization bill, mindful of the March 31 deadline imposed on the NMI Retirement Fund for the payment of outstanding medical referral bills owed to the Hawaii Pacific Medical Referrals. Chairman Benjamin Seman said a draft of the committee substitute to the original privatization legislation--or House Bill 13-243--has already been completed. "We need to address this by the March 31 deadline. We will try and submit a committee report so that the Governor will have an idea on what the status of the insurance would be before he makes a decision whether or not to respond to the HMPR's request for an additional \$1 million before the end of the month," Seman explained to reporters yesterday.



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

RFQ12-GOV-052

Puerto Rico Reservoir Replacement

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting statements of qualification (SOQ) from licensed architectural and engineering firms (A&E) for the Design of the Puerto Rico Reservoir Replacement Project, Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The full Request for Qualifications (RFQ) documents may be obtained by contacting Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager, by telephone at (670) 664-2274 or by email at psas@saipan.com. All questions concerning this proposal shall be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 pm, March 30, 2012 to Mr. Sasamoto by facsimile at (670) 664-2279.

The design and construction of the Puerto Rico Reservoir Replacement Project is made possible by a grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce. All elements of the construction process shall meet standards of the EDA. The EDA grant is matched by a grant from the Office of the Insular Affairs (OIA), U.S. Department of the Interior and requires a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance.

One original and four (4) copies shall be submitted to the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than **2:00 PM, (CNMI local time), on April 16, 2012.**

The SOQ shall be marked **"Puerto Rico Reservoir Replacement Project, RFQ12-GOV-052"**. For firms within the CNMI, one (1) original and four (4) copies of SOQ must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than **2:00 p.m. (CNMI local time), on April 16, 2012.** Firms located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to Propose must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **2:00 p.m. (CNMI local time), on April 16, 2012,** and may be transmitted via facsimile to **(670) 664-1515** or email procurement@pticom.com. For firms located outside the CNMI, one original and four (4) copies of SOQ must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **April 16, 2012 AND** must be received no later than **April 25, 2012.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The CNMI reserves the right to reject any and all SOQ and to waive any imperfections in any SOQ if to do so shall be in the best interests of the CNMI. All SOQ shall become the exclusive property of the CNMI government.

/s/ **Benigno R. Fitial**
Governor, CNMI

/s/ **Herman S. Sablan**
Director, Procurement & Supply

Crossroads for the world's biggest tuna fishery

» Pew presses for better management of tuna, sharks, and illegal fishing

GUAM—Decisions affecting the world's largest tuna fishery, its biggest fish, and the economies of some of the smallest countries will be made when representatives of more than 25 governments gather for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission annual meeting from March 26-30.

"These governments will make decisions about important measures to divide the region's tuna resources, enact shark protection measures, and combat illegal fishing," said Sue Liberman, the Pew Environment Group's director of International Policy.

New conservation measures for tuna?

More than 50 percent of the world's tuna catch comes from waters managed by the WCPFC, which regulates fishing in an area covering almost 20 percent of the Earth's surface.

According to the commission's Scientific Committee, bigeye tuna, used in sushi and as tuna steak, are being overfished; yellowfin tuna are being caught to the limit of sustainability; and skipjack, the variety commonly found in cans on supermarket shelves, must be watched closely. The number of industrial fishing vessels engaged in these fisheries is increasing, but scientific data indicates a need for catch limits.

To maximize their haul, fishermen deploy fish aggregating devices, which attract various kinds of ocean wildlife, including sharks. It is estimated that tens of thousands of FADs are adrift in the waters of the western Pacific Ocean. Although international treaties call on fish-

ing operations to manage this type of gear to limit impacts on ocean life, in practice there is little or no oversight.

"This year could be a turning point for the WCPFC, as the opportunity for a new conservation and management measure for tropical tunas is on the table," said Gerry Leape, a senior officer for International Policy with the Pew Environment Group. "We call on all WCPFC governments to put long-term stability ahead of short-term self-interest so that this tuna fishery can retain its status as the world's most productive well into the future."

What's in it for sharks?

There are no limits on the number of sharks that can be caught in the WCPFC area, which stretches approximately 6,000 nautical miles. Oceanic whitetip sharks, once abundant but now listed as vulnerable, are routinely caught in nets and on longlines, a type of fishing gear with thousands of baited hooks suspended from lines that extend across to 100 kilometers (60 miles).

The increasing demand for shark fins, primarily as an ingredient in soup, gives fishermen little incentive to release the animals alive. Fins of various species have been observed in the marketplace at prices up to \$1,000 per pound (453 grams).

There is evidence that even when it is illegal to do so, fishermen often remove the sharks' fins at sea and dispose of the carcasses overboard. A proposal to be submitted by the United States at this meeting would prohibit catching or landing oceanic whitetips.

Member governments of the

WCPFC are also being urged to support a ban on deliberate fishing near whale sharks. Massive tuna vessels sometimes use whale sharks, the world's largest fish, as "living FADs," throwing their nets around them in order to catch tuna that swim nearby. When the net is cinched to snare the tuna, the whale shark can be harmed or killed.

More than 10 percent of these enormous animals die when they are trapped, and the fate of those released is unknown. Whale sharks are listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as "vulnerable to extinction" and are also protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

"It's time WCPFC members

recognized that this organization has done virtually nothing to safeguard sharks," said Matt Rand, who directs Pew's Global Shark Conservation Campaign. "They can change this by protecting two threatened shark species, which have been placed in peril in large part because of inaction and greed. Killing sharks just for their fins is unconscionable

and is causing many species to face extinction."

Curtailling illegal fishing

One study estimates the economic loss from illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in this region at 21 to 46 percent of the reported catch, which is valued at up to \$1.5 billion a year.

"Until criminal fishing is stopped, this commission's ability to oversee and manage fisheries in the region will be undermined," said Jeff Wise, director of Pew's Global Campaign to End Illegal Fishing. "Some countries allow their ports to be used by illegal operators, sometimes unwittingly. Others, either on their own or in cooperation with like-minded States, have begun to restrict port access as a means of controlling pirate fishing."


This year, member countries of the WCPFC must move from discussion to results by adopting measures to monitor suspicious vessels seeking entry to their harbors. These efforts should include helping developing States build their capacity to enforce illegal fishing regulations at port.

A delegation from the Pew Environment group will be attending the WCPFC meeting, encouraging member governments to take the necessary steps to continue to improve fisheries management in the Pacific Ocean. *(Pew)*





QUENTIN HANICH

More than half the world's tuna comes from the Western and Central Pacific, where fishing nets killed approximately 60 whale sharks in 2009. Massive tuna vessels often deploy purse-seine nets, which can stretch up to a mile wide and 1,000 feet deep.




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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)



PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DATE: MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2012 * TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC RFP 2012-006

"Server Active Directory Design & Installation/Laserfiche Upgrade and Installation/Citrix Server Connection/Network Routing & Switching"

Proposal packets will be available on March 19, 2012, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

There will be a Pre-Proposal Meeting on **Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 9:00AM** at NMHC conference office. Potential off-island proposers may make arrangement to participate in meeting via phone, but are encouraged to attend in person if at all possible due to the anticipated detail and complexity involved in this RFP.


Question arising after this meeting must be addressed to Jocelyn S. Kaipat, Office Manager/Procurement Officer via email jkaipat@nmhc.gov.net no later than **Friday, March 30, 2012**.

Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 2011. This is a Federally Funded project, as such, Local Preference is not available because its use is prohibited by federal law granting funding for this project.


The government reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and to waive any imperfections in any Proposal in the best interest of the Government. All Proposals shall become the property of the Government.


/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply




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INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)



BID SUBMISSION DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2012 * TIME: 10:00 AM

AMENDMENT #01 - NMHC IFB 2012-R-003

"CONSTRUCTION OF PERIMETER PATHWAY FOR SINAPALO CHILDREN'S PARK"

Proposal packets will be available on March 19, 2012, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, or at the Field Office in Singsong Village, Rota, during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday through Friday except CNMI holidays. Inquiries may be directed to Ms. Jocelyn S. Kaipat, Office Manager, at telephone numbers: (670) 234-6866/7689 during regular business hours or Mr. Barrie C. Toves, Rota Field Office Representative, at (670) 532-9410. A non-refundable payment of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by cash, credit card, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

A mandatory pre-bid conference will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, March 30, 2012, at the proposed project site located in Sinapalo, Rota, and all interested bidders will be given the opportunity to walk through the proposed site, familiarize themselves with the required work and ask questions regarding the project. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Acting Corporate Director of the NMHC, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or faxed to (670) 322-3547 no later than 10:30 a.m. local time, Friday, March 30, 2012.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant, American Recovery and Reinvestment (CDBG-R) funding provided to the Commonwealth that mandates ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED AND INCORPORATED INTO THE BUILDING/WORK MUST BE MANUFACTURED OR PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply



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BID SUBMISSION DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2012 * TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2012-R-004

"ADA Compliance Retrofit of the Marianas Medical Referral Center (MMRC)"


Proposal packets will be available on March 19, 2012, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by cash, credit card, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

A mandatory pre-bid conference will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 28, 2012, at the proposed project site located in As Lito, Saipan, and all interested bidders will be given the opportunity to walk through the proposed site, familiarize themselves with the required work and ask questions regarding the project. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Acting Corporate Director of the NMHC, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or faxed to (670) 322-3547 no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, Thursday, March 29, 2012.


This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant, American Recovery and Reinvestment (CDBG-R) funding provided to the Commonwealth that mandates ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED AND INCORPORATED INTO THE BUILDING/WORK MUST BE MANUFACTURED OR PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.


/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply




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INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD EDI-SP funds.)



BID SUBMISSION DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2012 * TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2012-EDI-005

"Repair & Renovation of the Roofing System for the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library"


Proposal packets will be available on March 19, 2012, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by cash, credit card, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

A mandatory pre-bid conference will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 28, 2012, at the proposed project site located in Susupe, Saipan, and all interested bidders will be given the opportunity to walk through the proposed site, familiarize themselves with the required work and ask questions regarding the project. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Acting Corporate Director of the NMHC, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or faxed to (670) 322-3547 no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, Thursday, March 29, 2012.


This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Economic Development Initiative Special Projects Grant (EDI-SP).


/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply




**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**





REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP12-OPA-057



SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 19, 2012 * TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"FINANCIAL AUDIT OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE'S CREDIT UNION FOR THE YEARS ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2009, 2010 AND 2011"

THE AUDIT GUIDELINES AND SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE PUBLIC AUDITOR'S MAIN OFFICE AT 1236 YAP DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN DURING NORMAL WORKING HOURS FROM 8:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, EXCEPT HOLIDAYS, OR FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

INQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO MR. ROSAURIO D. ZAPANTA, ANALYST MANAGER, AT TELEPHONE NUMBERS (670) 322-6481/2 OR BY FACSIMILE TO (670) 322-7812.


PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118. THE APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CALIMED.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH


/s/ MICHAEL PM
PUBLIC AUDITOR


/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

/s/ LARRISA C. LARSON
SECRETARY OF FINANCE




COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp





**SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE SERVICES FOR THE
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER (ATCT)
PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-001-12**



**AMENDED
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for Preventive Maintenance of the Air Traffic Control Tower at the Saipan International Airport on the Island of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The scope of work entails providing monthly maintenance services for the Tower, the Base Building and its surroundings. The proposal package which includes the scope of work, evaluation factors, and draft agreement will be available at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, 2nd Floor of the Arrival Building beginning Tuesday, March 6, 2012. Proposers must submit all required documents listed in the scope of work. All responses to this RFP shall also take into account any and all costs that will be charged to the proposer awarded the contract for the project. Proposers shall also take into consideration all necessary badging requirements and fees for this project.

All proposals shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "Proposal for the Preventive Maintenance of the Air Traffic Control Tower at the Saipan International Airport". One original and two (2) copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than **4:30 P.M. LOCAL TIME, MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2012**, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport.

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following factors: (1) price, (2) company experience, (3) insurance requirements, (4) schedule of operation, (5) sufficiency of workers, and (6) financial capability.

Contractor will be required to obtain insurance policies based on CPA's requirements. Copies of the insurance requirements may be obtained with the scope of work at the office of the Executive Director.

A pre-proposal meeting will be held at the CPA Conference Room, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport at 2:00 p.m., Thursday, March 22, 2012 to explain and clarify any questions regarding this project which will be followed with a walk through of the facility. Questions must be in writing and faxed to the Executive Director at (670) 234-5962 or via email at cpa.admin@pticom.com at least seven (7) days prior to the pre-proposal conference.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding proposal rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

CPA assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of offeror's preparation of the proposal or supply under the contract. This RFP does not commit CPA to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services.

Offerors will be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CPA Procurement Regulations.

All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Proposals received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ EDWARD M. DELEON GUERRERO
Executive Director

03/07/2012
Date:

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Zygotes with benefits?

The following editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Times on Thursday, March 22:

The Supreme Court heard arguments Monday in a case titled *Astrue v. Capato*, but a better name for it might be “In re: Brave New World.”

Karen Capato, who conceived twins through artificial insemination after their biological father died, asked the justices to overrule the Social Security Administration and hold that the children are entitled to survivor benefits. As Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. pointed out, the authors of the Social Security Act “never had any inkling about the situation that has arisen in this case.”

But the fact that Congress couldn’t foresee the world of sperm banks and test tube babies doesn’t mean that the statute is meaningless. It’s possible to discern a general principle in the law, and the court should apply that principle by rejecting the twins’ claim.

Astrue v. Capato has attracted attention as an example of the way technological advances will bedevil the work of the Supreme Court, an early milestone on a road that may someday have the justices deciding whether robots are people under the 14th Amendment.

But the case illustrates more than the fact that yesterday’s science fiction is today’s science fact. It also illuminates the distinction between two approaches to judicial interpretation that are often treated as interchangeable: “original intent” and “original meaning.” The former means that judges should apply a legal text only to circumstances its authors could foresee. But that’s not a particularly helpful approach.

The framers of the 4th Amendment didn’t have telephones in mind when they prohibited unreasonable searches and seizures, so they couldn’t have intended the amendment to apply to wiretapping. Yet the Supreme Court was right to recognize that the meaning of that amendment—the protection of privacy—required that police obtain a warrant before listening in on telephone calls.

In a similar way, Congress had a general purpose in mind in 1939 when it provided for survivor benefits for the children of Social Security participants: to replace the income the children had received from a parent during his life. That purpose didn’t change when Congress amended the law in 1965 to broaden the definition of eligible children to include those born out of wedlock who were acknowledged or being supported by their parents.

By definition, a child conceived and born after a parent’s death never relied on his or her financial support, so there’s no reason that child should be entitled to survivor benefits. If the court focuses on the meaning of the law, that’s the reasonable conclusion.

And if Congress thinks that’s unfair and prefers to protect progeny born years or decades after a parent’s death, it can amend the law for a brave new world.

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Make the impossible dream come true!

Imagine: Saipan, Tinian, and Rota growing over 500,000 lbs of fruits and vegetables monthly! Imagine: Processing over 100,000 lbs of pork monthly! Imagine: Raising over 10,000 lbs of shrimp monthly! Imagine: Harvesting over 50,000 lbs of fish from our oceans monthly! Imagine: The addition of thousands of pounds of value-added products made from the above products! For our own use and for export! The end result is a prosperous and employed community. This is not an impossible dream! We can do it! How?

Agriculture boosted by technology will make this happen. Yes, agriculture can be our next big industry, second to tourism. Our three major islands—Saipan, Tinian and Rota—have the basics to produce these quantities! The land and resources are here waiting for us to utilize them. Here is how to achieve this and realize the importance this can mean to us economically and socially.

Farming today is not the farming of 20 years ago. Farming is an industry. Today’s agricultural production has doubled, while total input use, including labor, land and machinery, has declined slightly. The impetus to this is that technology is bringing about one of the most dynamic periods in American agriculture. As an example, between 1948 and 1996, agricultural productivity increased more than eightfold.

Today, productivity increases center on rising yield per acre and per animal. Also, farmers are spending more on management services and efficiency-producing inputs, such as chemicals and irrigation, and less on traditional inputs such as machinery. As a result farmers produce more and higher value products.

Another change has been the move to consolidate smaller farms with large farms. In this manner costs are reduced and less farm labor is required. Larger farms are able to adopt technology more rapidly than smaller farms.

One of the major problems farmers many times face is the inadequate supply of water. But with drip irrigation this problem is surmountable. Drip irrigation method, also called drop by drop irrigation and underground irrigation, functions as its name implies. Drop by drop, water is distributed to the active root zone of plants.

This method, if managed properly, might be the most water-supply-efficient way of irrigation, because runoff and evaporation are reduced significantly. Drip irrigation in today’s agriculture is frequently integrated with plastic sheet, further diminishing evaporation, and is also a method of fertilizer delivery to the plants. Drip irrigation is done with the help of narrow tubes that deliver water directly to the base of the plant. Has any farmer used this method here?

With today’s technology, farmers with thousands of acres of land receive the same information and control backyard gardeners have at their fingertips. Computers, satellites, and microchips are giving farmers better information and making machinery smarter and more powerful. In other words technology is dramatically increasing the amount of land each farmer can work effectively.

Not only in agriculture is technology creating greater productivity; it is helping livestock producers by using computers to get better information about their operations. Computer chips imbedded in the ear of an animal can be used to monitor growth and production.

ANTHONY PELLEGRINO

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



A farmer with dairy cows can easily monitor milk production and health records by scanning the chip imbedded in the animal’s ear. These are only a few of the ways that technology is increasing and improving production on the farm.

In addition to technology, more colleges are doing research to improve farming techniques. Researchers help synthesize and analyze the overwhelming mass of information available to farmers through their extension services. For example the Northern Marianas College through its CREES department offers great assistance to any farmer who desires it. How many farmers are asking for assistance from CREES? It’s free!

The science of biotechnology is developing specialized seeds and breeding stocks to give farmers and ranchers increased profits through improved control over their production. For many years, producers have been using conventional propagation and breeding to cultivate beneficial attributes. However, genetic engineering promises more precision, helping scientists examine the entire spectrum of genes from all organisms for potential improvements to crops and livestock.

Genes are being developed to protect poultry and cattle from specific diseases. Genetic technology is more complicated in livestock than in crops, but scientists are pinpointing markers to guide them to genes that will someday revolutionize the meat industry.

The revolution continues with better chemicals that help farmers plant a cover crop following harvest of the primary crop to protect the land from wind and water. The chemicals suppress weeds, and feed organic matter to the soil. Use of cover crops has increased because today’s herbicides let farmers kill the cover crop fully so that it will not compete with the primary crop.

All of these advances in agriculture technology are also adding to value-added farm products. Through better crop production and control, food manufacturers are adding to our diet new and varied foods. Consider the demand for organic fruits, vegetables, meat, and eggs. They all sell at a higher price because of their improved production and quality.

Also a factor that is helping improve the productivity and sales of agriculture products is improved shipping methods. In today’s grocery stores, food is just as likely to come from around the world as from a farm in the next county. We have truly become a globalized world not only in communication but in agriculture. This is the major reason an air cargo bridge is now being

See MAKE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Leksion ginen as nana

Kada mattu gi hinasoghu si biahu (nanan tatahu) hu lie’ nina’ siñan un’ poble, humidde yan namase’ na prohima ni hagas numae’ animu gi halom plaset pineble. ‘Nai hu bisita un’ biahe, sige ha fasensine ilun guaka. Ha asne dispues ha kana’ gi alamle gi hilu foggun para u ha’me. Hu faisen kau mamakanu’ ayu na sensin siha. Chumaleg i amku’ ya ilegña para u pika i teteñnan na to’lañg teñgu ya para u kaddu. Hana’ chageyu’ dispues.

Ha birague’ ya sige ha etsis i linasasña choda para tamales yan titiyas. Mientras mamasa pinada’ña, humalom i amku’ na guaha umestotoba hinasoghu. Era hu dibibina kau magahet na mamakanu’ sensin ilun guaka yan kau siña mafa’ titiyas i cheda.

Ilegña, “Ihu, gi antigu na Chamorro, ma-apprubecha todú patten ga’ga’ ya mana’ ginachuñge finatinas ginen i gualu siha”. Sige ha lista tat kumu atmayas, atulin harina, atlulin mai’es, tamales choda, sune yan medioka ni makakanu’ yan tininun hina’men sensin ilun guaka, babue ‘sino guihan.

Hu usune un’ biahe huma’men sensin pechu gi sumen dispasiu na guafe. Ha hoñgañgyu’ sa’ mumañaña dispues de hu tunu. “Todú tiempu este katne, dispasiu na guafe ‘nai unna’ lagu pot para u huyuñg sabotña piot gi halom kaddu”. Hu hassu i manñge’ na kaddun to’lañg guaka yan kustiyan yan ñiañggon babue. De dios na pairen sentada.

Sige mona, hu soda’ man-inkokola magagu. Hu ekuñgog hafa i rason na ma-inkokola piot a’paka na magagon familia, kontodu ma-atbidon chinina yan kasunes. Kase i mas yahu na tiempo yan bihahu ayu na patte ‘an uma’adiñgan ‘sino umestotoria pot antes siha na ti-

empu. Ginen guiya ‘nai hu komprende kuttura yan tradision natibu, kontodu usun liñguahe ni ma-u’usa ni man-amku’.

Ti hu tuñgu haf’ na sessu mattu gi hinasoghu na tiempu. Buente pot estayu’ malalañgu ya megai ‘nai hu diseña tatte i hagas fuetsaghu. Gaige lokue’ buente pinitña giya hame pot esta mañasaunau ham gi tropan kalun temu yan ti fitme na fangu’ot mame. Esta pagu hu chachage ha’ man-ha’me katne ni ineyaghu ginen i sinantusan na biahu.

Yine’ase’ Saina

Mañaunau ham yan mañeluhu man-mañetbe kumu tanores gi misan mona pot kuattru años na tiempu. ‘An monhayan ninalagun mame ‘an chatagmag, in’ tilus ham para i gima Yuus gi kase oran ‘las kuattru. In’ tutuhon gi man-apañgon yan man-primun mame siha.

Mayamag yori’, matiteg kasunes yan chinina trahen mame megaiña basis guihe siha na tiempu. In’ lilie’ man-gachoñg mame yan nuebu na mudan niha piot gi pueñgen Noche Buena yan Año Nuevo gi oran kumuñion yan ñgiñge’ Niñu. In’ pañiot todus i mantaya’ mame sa’ ennau na estau ‘nai mangaige ham. Ya maseha tai-guine, manfelis todú hinanau mame.

Lau todus pot todus, ni unu lumie’ hafa gaige gi tatautau mame sa’ tinatampe ni sutanan tanores. Ha tampe ham i Saina gi este siha na tiempo ya ni unu tumuñgu’ kuantu chiña chinatsagan mame. Magahet i Saina na libianu ha tampe yan hana’ fan ma’agim i mas mamoble siha na famaguoña.

Otru asuntu siha

Este siha na klasen finapos fumañagu yan muna’ fitmet i pegsi hinimidde gi maseha haye na kilisyanu. Enfin, un’ fina’pos ‘nai umeyag hau

sale, trade, and possession of shark fin. Shark fin trade bans were also passed in the Canadian municipalities of Brantford, Mississauga, Oakville, Pickering, London, and Toronto. In the last few months, similar laws have been introduced in legislatures in Florida, New York, Maryland, Virginia, and even land-locked Illinois.

Stirred by Palau’s 2011 landmark declaration of the world’s first shark sanctuary, in 2011 The Bahamas, Tokelau, Honduras, and the Marshall Islands declared shark sanctuaries, ending commercial shark fishing in their countries’ full exclusive economic zones. The shark sanctuary in the Marshall Islands is 1,990,530 square kilometers, an ocean area four times the landmass of California.

Worldwide interest in sharks has boomed in recent years, and dive enthusiasts are willing to travel thousands of miles and spend thousands of dollars to swim with these creatures. Palau, of course, is well known for dive sites that sharks frequent on a daily basis. A recent study found that this shark diving accounts for fully 8% of Palau’s annual GDP. It is

from within from those who reside in the USVI (that come from places with established constitutions and political status). Their satisfaction with the status quo continues to make it extremely difficult to discuss, plan, propose, or even successfully act on any form of self-determination.

Has your political status been determined? Do you have an established Constitution? How did you decide who will participate in the decision? How many casualties of war has your territory experienced? Imagine we, the U.S. Insular Areas, do not even have the opportunity to “pretend” to vote for the person who sends us to war.

Join the Virgin Islands in our quest for self-determination. There is strength in numbers. Let us find common concerns, similarities and with modern technology we can interface and come up with collective strategies that can and will benefit all of us in our individual and collective journey for self-determination.

Director Nik Pula of the Office of Insular Affairs and Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Tony Babauta have received the correspondences regarding the concerns of the residents of the U.S. Vir-

people will be employed and earning money, instead of lining up at the food stamp office.

Today agriculture is not a hobby but a serious industry. When we incorporate the technology that is daily being developed and apply it to agriculture, the CNMI—Saipan, Tinian, and Rota—can virtually feed us, feed Guam, and the huge military market beckoning to us.


To sum it up: Agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, and value added products can amount to almost \$1 million income per month on our islands. In addition hundreds of us will be employed. At the same time we will have built a bridge between Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam with our “Marianas Produce.” We will again become brothers and sister.

I am reminded of the lyrics from the song: The Impossible Dream:
*To dream the impossible dream
To fight the unbeatable foe
To bear with unbearable sorrow
To run where the brave dare not go*

*To right the unrightable wrong
To love, pure and chaste from afar
To try when your arms are too weary*

By JOHN DELROSARIO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



mama’ tautau sa’ ninae’ hau leksion para un’ tuñgu’ ginen manu hau mage. Sinede hau umatan i prohimumu kumu hagu mismu. Ha lulug gi korasonmu sensian yine’ase’ yan mina’ase’ gi peble yan namase’.

Pot essu na makat giya guahu i line’hu guine gi alacha ‘nai ta butleha i otro pot binibu ‘sino ti parehuta lau tautau lokue’. Kau un’ agradese madulalag ginen Guam, Hawaii ‘sino manu na estados pot ti ginen ayu hau orihinat lau un’ disidi kumu petmanente na lugat familiamu?

Sotta ya i lai u dinikta hafa para u fan masusede sa’ guaha areglon federat pot hutnaderos ginen hiyoñg. Famatkilu ya muñga mana’ oppan mala’et siha na palabras piot ya hagas man-mirese hau sitbision muchacha ‘nai sessu lotgun hau gi bandan sueddoña. Na fan ma’agim korason miyu sa’ todú asuntun linahyan gai arelgu.

■ ■ ■
Pot Ositan: Dinilalag dos amigu ni galagu gi gima’ bisinu. Fuetsau malagon matai lau matompu’ i dos gi fihon kusina. Estaba gi sanmena prestan taki’. Mamaisen i unu kau enfin prestan taki’ i ma-ñiñgiñge’. Ineppe na huñgan. Ilegña, “Taña fan pot prueba”. De dios mihu!

only a matter of time before the world discovers the rest of Micronesia and the other shark and ray dives throughout your islands.

Congratulations to everyone involved on our one-year anniversary in creating policies to protect sharks. Thank you to our senators for working with the community to draft science driven, culturally sensitive policy, thank you to Governor Calvo for signing this important legislation into law, and thank you to all the citizen activists, especially the students at Simon Sanchez High School, George Washington High School, and John F. Kennedy High School for your infectious energy. Working together, with local citizens teaming up with international organizations like Humane Society International, Shark Savers, and the Pew Environment Group, we can protect the world’s sharks from extinction.

Carlotta Leon Guerrero
Ayuda Network, Guam

gin Islands. It is our belief that there is no one better to facilitate the concerns of the U.S. citizens of the U.S. Insular Areas, none other than one who knows the concerns and has lived the experience. We need your help to get their attention beyond acknowledgment of our correspondences. We invite you to the following websites and Internet radio to follow first-hand some of the issues in the Virgin Islands that are similar to those in your insular area.

■ Crucians in Focus: <http://cruciansinfocus.com/>
■ Wdhp Reef Broadcasting: <http://www.mainstreamnetwork.com/listen/player.asp?station=wdhp-am>
■ Freeman’s Ground: <http://173.201.183.72/~interact/forum/>

If there is anything in this correspondence that resonates with you please make it known by contacting: Hon. Anthony M. Babauta, Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs at Tony_Babauta@ios.doi.gov or calling 202-208-4709 or faxing to 202-219-1989.

Stephanie Scott-Williams
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

To reach the unreachable star

*This is my quest
To follow that star
No matter how hopeless
No matter how far*

*To fight for the right
Without question or pause
To be willing to march into hell
For a heavenly cause...*

To reach the unreachable star!

But then what is the worth of life but to reach for stars beyond our grasp! Samuel Jonson over a hundred years ago wrote: “Agriculture not only gives riches to a nation but the only riches she can call her own.”

Yes, agriculture, animal husbandry, and fishing coupled with technology can become our second most important industry. It need not be an impossible dream. People, if we stop our butts (excuses) we can do it! Keep the smiles going!

Letters to the Editor

Inspiring the world

Around the world, Micronesia is fast becoming known as home to the world’s first shark sanctuary, the world’s largest shark sanctuary, and thanks to Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, the second and third shark fin trade bans in the world respectively.

Micronesia leads the world in shark conservation, both in terms of the area of ocean protected, implementation and enforcement of policies, and fines levied against lawbreakers. This leadership is an inspiration to the rest of the world.

Last year, following the laws passed in Guam and Northern Mariana Islands, the entire west coast of the United States banned the

Political status questions

This is an open letter to the indigenous people of American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Greater Pacific Region. The U.S. Virgin Islands was an unincorporated and unorganized territory of the United States until 1936. After 1936 the Virgin Islands became an organized unincorporated territory until the 1954 Organic Act. Organized meaning that we are governed by a federal Organic Act, which continues to serve as our Constitution. After the 1954 Organic Act, Congress defined the Virgin Islands as unincorporated, an indication of Congress’ attempt to withhold the incorporated status and that of statehood from the Virgin Islands.

The U. S. Virgin Islands has made five attempts to draft a Constitution and at least two attempts to determine our political status. One might say unsuccessful. Attempts that have been heavily influenced by our porous borders and constant external interference

MAKE

From Page 10

planned in the CNMI to improve exports. Think of the thousands of pounds of locally grown agricultural products exported while importing thousands of dollars!






By now you are wondering why I took you down this path suggesting that agriculture can be our second largest industry. Daily we wrestle with the question about what is the best industry to revitalize our economy. What many people are ignoring is that our people must be employed or they will become parasitic and more dependent on food stamps while only 1 percent of the insiders prosper. The 99 percent of us will remain poor as the people on Tinian are after having a 12-year-old major casino.

A few days ago I flew to Tinian. Looking out the window of the plane, I lamented at the thousands of untilled acres that I saw below. I repeatedly kept saying to myself: These are the acres of diamonds waiting to be cultivated! By cultivating these diamonds under our feet, millions of dollars are waiting to be earned with pride and dignity. And as we develop our agriculture industry, hundreds of our

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Mostly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲ 86 ▼ 77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 77
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲ 88 ▼ 80
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 80
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 80
Majuro	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79

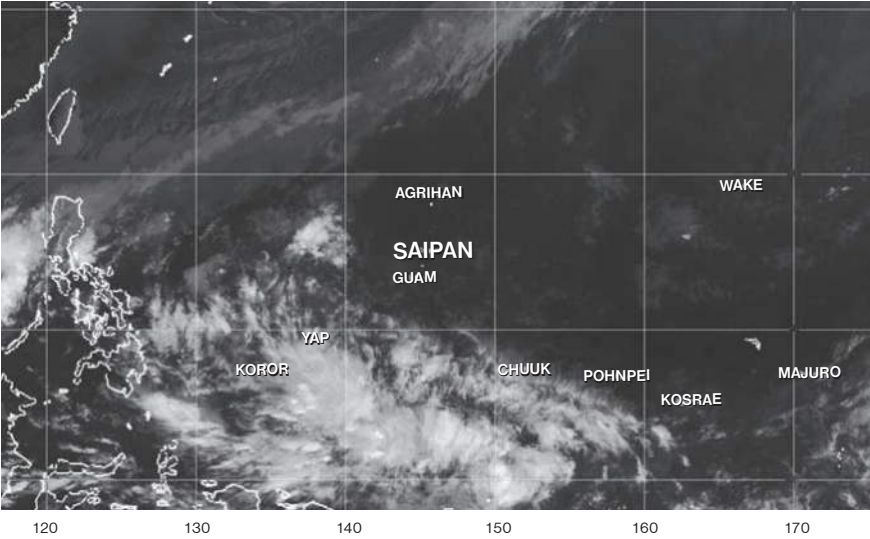
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲ 65 ▼ 61
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 64 ▼ 33
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲ 68 ▼ 62
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲ 77 ▼ 69
London	Mostly Sunny	▲ 61 ▼ 42
Los Angeles	Rain	▲ 60 ▼ 48
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 81 ▼ 76
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲ 70 ▼ 49
Miami	Thundershowers	▲ 85 ▼ 64
New York	Showers	▲ 55 ▼ 46
Osaka	Showers	▲ 50 ▼ 39
Paris	Sunny	▲ 66 ▼ 44
Pusan	Sunny	▲ 53 ▼ 36
Rome	Sunny	▲ 72 ▼ 49
Salem	Showers	▲ 56 ▼ 38
San Francisco	Rain	▲ 53 ▼ 48
Seoul	Sunny	▲ 47 ▼ 30
Tokyo	Sunny	▲ 55 ▼ 37
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲ 70 ▼ 46

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
4:53 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet	
10:14 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	
5:13 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet	
11:39 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from near Iwo To island at 25N144E to beyond 130E at 17N. Cloudiness and widespread rain are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of the front. A surface trough runs northeastward from 9N133E to 16N138E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms associated with this feature are seen west of the Marianas between 14N and 19N from 136E to 141E. A monsoon trough meanders southeastward from Mindanao across 7N130eE then through two weak circulations centered near Koror at 6N137E and southwest of Chuuk at 3N147E to finally end at EQ155E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms related to this trough are occurring over a large area. This area covers Koror and Yap but is south of Chuuk and Pohnpei and is south of a line from 12N130E to 12N136E to 5N149E to 5N157E. A surface trough runs eastward from 3N158E to 3N165E then turns southeastward to end at EQ178E. Widely scattered showers are present near the trough axis over Kosrae and part of the Marshall Islands between the equator and 7N from 160E to 178E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:17 AM	6:29 PM
Tuesday	6:16 AM	6:29 PM
Wednesday	6:15 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:15 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:14 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	8:19 AM	9:23 PM
Tuesday	9:02 AM	10:13 PM
Wednesday	9:48 AM	11:03 PM
Thursday	10:36 AM	11:52 PM
Friday	11:27 AM	

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
 - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP) C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN) C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 400	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

Stuck with high gas prices, drivers just pump less

By **CHRIS KAHN** and **TOM KRISHER**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

Americans have pumped less gas every week for the past year.

During those 52 weeks, gasoline consumption dropped by 4.2 billion gallons, or 3 percent, according to MasterCard SpendingPulse. The decline is longer than a 51-week slide during the recession.

The main reason: higher gas prices. The national average for a gallon of gas is \$3.89, the highest ever for this time of year, and experts say it could be \$4.25 by late April. As a result, Americans are taking fewer trips to restaurants and shopping malls. When they take a vacation, they're staying closer to home.

But the decline in gas consumption is also a sign that ef-

forts to push carmakers to produce vehicles with better gas mileage are paying off. The average new car now gets nearly 24 miles to the gallon, compared with about 20 mpg just four years ago, according to the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute.

"I'd expect to see lower gasoline consumption for several years to come," Rice University energy expert Ken Medlock says.

Americans have cut back on fill-ups for extended periods before. In 2008, gas spiked from \$3.04 to \$4.11 per gallon in seven months. It wasn't until January 2009, when the national average for gas had dropped to \$1.86 that consumption increased. Drivers bought more gasoline for 23 weeks in a row.

"The spike in 2008 was a real shock to the system,"

Medlock says. "There's still a residual impact on people's driving behavior."

There were other stretches of reduced gas use, notably two into the 1970's and one in the early 1980's. But in those cases, Americans eventually went back to driving big cars and trucks that guzzled gas.

This time may be different. Medlock thinks economic growth will be too modest and gas prices will stay too high for Americans to start driving more anytime soon. Economists expect the U.S. economy to grow 2.5 percent in 2012. The government estimates that gas will average a record \$3.79 per gallon for the year.

John Gamel, who oversees MasterCard SpendingPulse's weekly consumption report, points to rising sales of fuel-efficient vehicles.

"People have gotten used to elevated prices and they've made their long-term purchases," Gamel says. "They're going to be using less fuel."

Consumers now care more if a car gets good gas mileage than if it's reliable, stylish or comes with a great deal, according to a survey of more than 24,000 new-vehicle owners taken last summer and fall by J.D. Power and Associates. That wasn't the case in the nine previous years that J.D. Power conducted the survey.

Automakers have listened to

consumers, and responded to stricter government fuel economy requirements. They've improved engines and transmissions so cars burn less fuel. They've also made cars more aerodynamic, boosting mileage by cutting wind drag. The government is gradually increasing gas mileage requirements so that by 2025, cars and trucks will have to average 54.5 mpg.

Between February 2011 and February 2012, the combined city-highway mileage of a new vehicle sold in the U.S. rose to 23.7 mpg from 22.7. Better gas

mileage has a huge impact on the overall economy. At \$3.86 per gallon, U.S. drivers would save \$35.8 billion per year with a 1 mpg improvement for the entire fleet of cars, trucks and buses, according to Michael Sivak, a research professor with the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute.

Consumers would appreciate the help. The rise in gas prices has been so steep that they're still spending more on gas than a year ago despite using less.

Gasoline prices rose by 24 percent in the last 52 weeks, according to auto club AAA, Wright Express and Oil Price Information Service. MasterCard, which collects purchase receipts from more than 100,000 service stations around the country, said spending on gas rose by 20 percent during the period.

In 2011, Americans spent 8.4 percent of their household income on gasoline, or about \$4,155, compared with 6.7 percent in 2010, according to experts at OPIS.

W.M. Lewis, a general contractor in Anchorage, Alaska, says he is spending as much as \$150 a week on gas. He's consolidating his errands, but still limiting his driving because fuel keeps getting more expensive.

"It's changing everybody's plans," he says. "You have less money to spend."

Behind all this is the high price of oil. Brent crude, which is used to price most of the oil used to make gasoline at many U.S. coastal refineries, has jumped by 16 percent this year to more than \$124 per barrel. Benchmark U.S. crude has risen 9 percent this year to more than \$107 per barrel.

Increased gas use by the growing number of drivers in China and other developing nations more than makes up for the drop in the U.S. That contributes to an increase in global demand for oil, which in turn pushes the price higher. Fear of a disruption to oil supplies from the Middle East also is keeping oil prices at lofty levels.

Facebook warns employers not to demand passwords

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Facebook is warning employers not to demand the passwords of job applicants, saying that it's an invasion of privacy that opens companies to legal liabilities.

The social networking company is also threatening legal action against those who violate its long-standing policy against sharing passwords.

An Associated Press story this week documented cases of job applicants who are being asked, at the interview table, to reveal their Facebook passwords so their prospective employers can check their

backgrounds.

In a post on Friday, Facebook's chief privacy officer cautioned that if an employer discovers that a job applicant is a member of a protected group, the employer may open itself up to claims of discrimination if it doesn't hire that person.

"As a user, you shouldn't be forced to share your private information and communications just to get a job," wrote Erin Egan. "And as the friend of a user, you shouldn't have to worry that your private information or communications will be revealed to someone you don't know and didn't intend to share with just because that

user is looking for a job."

Not sharing passwords is a basic tenet of online conduct. Aside from the privacy concerns, Facebook considers the practice a security risk.

Facebook spokesman Andrew Noyes said that the company doesn't think employers should be asking applicants for their passwords because "we don't think it's the right thing to do."

"While we do not have any immediate plans to take legal action against any specific employers, we look forward to engaging with policymakers and other stakeholders, to help better safeguard the privacy of our users," he said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

GM recalling vans, SUVs to fix steering problem

DETROIT (AP)—General Motors is recalling more than 6,000 big vans and SUVs because their steering can fail. The recall affects certain 2012 Chevrolet Express and GMC Savana vans, and Chevrolet Suburban and GMC Yukon XL SUVs. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said on its website Saturday that a gear shaft can break, causing a loss of steering. GM says no crashes or injuries have been reported. The problem was discovered in testing by the company that makes the gear shafts. GM says failure won't happen until the vehicles have been in service for at least 5 months under severe use. The vans carry up to 15 passengers and are used widely by churches and airport shuttle services. GM dealers will inspect the steering gear shaft and replace it if necessary.

Obama calls for end of transportation showdown

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama wants Congress to end a showdown that threatens to cut off federal highway and transit aid to states just as the spring construction season starts. In his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama is encouraging voters to pressure Democrats and Republicans to pass a long-term trans-

portation bill. He says the economy will take a hit otherwise as construction projects sit idle. Obama reiterates the White House call for Congress to adopt the two-year \$109 billion bill the Senate passed overwhelmingly last week. House Republicans are divided over a five-year \$260 billion package. In the Republican address, Sen. Minority Leader Mitch McConnell says the time is now to repeal the president's health care bill.

Obama's unconventional pick to run the World Bank

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama's choice to lead the World Bank isn't the usual politician, lawyer or economist. Jim Yong Kim, the White House's surprise nominee, is an educator, a doctor and an anthropologist who has waged a sometimes audacious campaign to improve the health of the world's poorest. In the 1990s, defying skeptics, he found a cost-effective way to fight tuberculosis in the slums of South America. And he began a program to treat millions of Africans for HIV, that virus that causes AIDS. Since 2009, the Korean-born Kim, 52, has been president of Dartmouth College. "He's an outstanding choice," Jeffrey Sachs, a Columbia University economist who had been lobbying on his own behalf for the World Bank post, said in an interview.



In this March 19, 2012 photo, a man changes advertised fuel prices at a Shell station in Hot Springs, Ark.

IRS says it's auditing more millionaires

By **TIFFANY HSU**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Attention, millionaires, the watchful eye of the Internal Revenue Service is trained on you. During last year's tax season, 30 percent of multimillionaires were audited, the agency said. Overall, just 1.1 percent of individual income tax returns were checked.

Taxpayers making an adjusted gross annual income of \$10 million or more are increasingly on the IRS' radar—in 2010, just 18 percent of them faced audits, ac-

cording to a report from the agency. Nearly 21 percent of Americans making between \$5 million and \$10 million had their returns inspected, the IRS said; 12 percent of millionaires making less underwent the same process.

From Oct. 1, 2010, through Sept. 30, 2011, the agency said it collected \$2.4 trillion in taxes from 234 million processed returns, up from the \$2.3 trillion collected the year before. It was the first year of increased revenue since 2008.

The IRS said more than 133 million tax returns—including

more than three-quarters of all individual returns—were filed online. More than eight in 10 individual returns resulted in refunds—a total payout of \$338 billion (among all tax returns, nearly \$415.9 billion was refunded).

Nearly 4,700 criminal investigations were completed last year, the agency said, with 1,802 resulting in incarcerations.

Nearly 28 million returns, or \$281.2 million in gross collections, came from California—the most of any state. Nearly 13.9 million refunds, or \$47 million, went to taxpayers.

Nation

Rick Santorum beats Romney in Louisiana primary

By KASIE HUNT and PHILIP ELIOTT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rick Santorum won the Louisiana Republican presidential primary Saturday, beating front-runner Mitt Romney in yet another conservative Southern state.

"We're still here. We're still fighting. We still believe, as this race really shows," Santorum told supporters in Green Bay, Wis.

Although the victory gives Santorum bragging rights and 10 more delegates, it does not change the overall dynamics of the race; the former Pennsylvania senator still dramatically lags be-

hind Romney in the hunt for delegates to the GOP's summertime nominating convention.

Even so, Santorum's win underscores a pattern in the drawn-out race.

The under-funded underdog has tended to win in Bible Belt states that include Tennessee, Mississippi and Alabama. Romney—a deep-pocketed, highly organized former Massachusetts governor—has persistently struggled in such heavily conservative regions.

Said Santorum: "I'm not running as a conservative candidate for president. I am the conservative candidate for president."

Neither candidate was in the

state as Louisiana Republicans weighed in. Nor was former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who was trailing in Louisiana. With 100 percent of the precincts counted, unofficial returns showed Santorum with 49 percent to 27 percent for Romney. Gingrich was far back at 16 percent, followed by Ron Paul with 6 percent.

Romney tweeted his congratulations to Santorum: "Congratulations to Rick Santorum in LA. I look forward to the contests to come and to defeating (at)BarackObama in November."

Romney took a rare day off Saturday, with no public events.

Santorum spent the day campaigning in Pennsylvania and next-up Wisconsin, which votes April 3 and represents one of his last chances to beat Romney in a Midwestern state.

Santorum told voters in Milwaukee that he expected their state to be "the turning point in this race."

In an unmistakable jab at Romney, Santorum added: "Don't make the mistake that Republicans made in 1976. Don't nominate the moderate.

When you do, we lose." It was a reference to Ronald Reagan losing the 1976 Republican nomination to incumbent President Gerald Ford, and Democrat Jimmy Carter winning the White House.

Exit polls conducted for The Associated Press and the television networks showed that Santorum's win in Louisiana was one of his strongest performances to date among conservatives, working class voters and those calling the economy their top is-

sue. And he continued his dominance among white evangelical voters and those looking for a candidate who shares their religious beliefs. Santorum topped Romney among evangelical voters by more than 2 to 1.

As in previous Southern states, Romney's best showing came among those voters with annual incomes above \$100,000 and those who prioritized a candidate's ability to defeat President Barack Obama in November.

Report: Sandusky called 'likely pedophile' in '98

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP)—A psychologist who looked into a 1998 allegation against former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky told police at the time that his behavior fit the profile of a likely pedophile, NBC News reported Saturday.

Yet Sandusky was not criminally charged nor placed on a state registry of suspected child abusers, and prosecutors say he continued assaulting boys for more than a decade until his arrest in November.

NBC obtained a copy of the campus police department's investigatory report on an encounter in which Sandusky was accused of having inappropriate contact with an 11-year-old boy with whom he had showered naked on the Penn State campus.

The police file includes the

report of State College psychologist Alycia Chambers, who interviewed and provided counseling to the boy.

"My consultants agree that the incidents meet all of our definitions, based on experience and education, of a likely pedophile's pattern of building trust and gradual introduction of physical touch, within a context of a 'loving,' 'special' relationship," Chambers wrote.

However, a second psychologist, John Seasock, concluded that Sandusky had neither assaulted the boy nor fit the profile of a pedophile.

Chambers and Seasock did not immediately return phone messages left at their offices Saturday.

Centre County prosecutors ultimately decided not to charge Sandusky, and the case was

closed until a statewide grand jury accused the retired defensive coordinator of abusing the boy and nine others over a 15-year period. Sandusky, who faces more than 50 counts of child sex abuse, has pleaded innocent and awaits trial.

Chambers' warning to authorities raises new questions about the university's failure to stop Sandusky. Eight of the 10 boys were attacked on campus, prosecutors allege.

In 2002, four years after the 1998 investigation, prosecutors say then-graduate assistant Mike McQueary caught Sandusky sexually assaulting a boy in the football showers. McQueary reported what he saw to coach Joe Paterno, who, in turn, reported the allegation to university officials. But no police investigation was ever done.



Republican presidential candidate, former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum, right, is joined by his daughter Sarah Maria during a news conference in Green Bay, Wis., Saturday, March 24, 2012.

Aide says Cheney had heart transplant

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former Vice President Dick Cheney had a heart transplant Saturday, after five heart attacks over the past 25 years and countless medical procedures to keep him going. Cheney, 71, waited nearly two years for his new heart, the gift of an unknown donor.

An aide to Cheney disclosed the surgery after it was over, and said the ex-vice president was recovering at a Virginia hospital.

"Although the former vice president and his family do not know the identity of the donor, they will be forever grateful for this lifesaving gift," aide Kara Ahern said in a written statement that was authenticated by several of the Republican politician's close associates.

Cheney was recovering Saturday night at the intensive care unit of Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Va., after surgery earlier in the day.

More than 3,100 Americans currently are on the national waiting list for a heart transplant. Just over 2,300 heart transplants were performed last year, according to the United Network



In this Aug. 31, 2011 file photo, former Vice President Dick Cheney is interviewed in New York.

for Organ Sharing. And 330 people died while waiting.

According to UNOS, 332 people over age 65 received a heart transplant last year. The majority of transplants occur in 50- to 64-year-olds.

The odds of survival are good. More than 70 percent of heart transplant recipients live at least five years, although survival is a bit lower for people over age 65.

The former vice president suffered a heart attack in 2010, his fifth since the age of 37.

That same year, he had sur-

gery to have a small pump installed to help his heart keep working.

Called a "left ventricular assist device," or LVAD, that device took over the job of the heart's main pumping chamber, powered by special batteries worn in a fanny pack. It helps a person live a fairly normal life while awaiting a heart transplant, although some people receive it as permanent therapy. It was one of the few steps left, short of a transplant, to stay alive in the face of what he acknowledged was "increasing congestive heart failure."

In January 2011, Cheney said he was getting by on the battery-powered heart pump, which made it "awkward to walk around." He also said he hadn't made a decision yet on a transplant, but that "the technology is getting better and better."

Cheney said then that he'd "have to make a decision at some point whether I want to go for a transplant."

By that point, Cheney had been dealing with cardiovascular problems for more than two decades.

ACROSS THE NATION

Student shot dead on Mississippi State campus

STARKVILLE, Miss. (AP)—A student was shot to death at a Mississippi State University residence hall late Saturday night, prompting campus-wide alerts as authorities searched for suspects who fled the scene. University spokeswoman Maridith Geuder said police received a call about the shooting at Evans Hall around 10 p.m. Saturday. The victim was taken to a hospital where he subsequently died. Three male suspects fled the building in a blue Crown Victoria. As of early Sunday, no arrests had been made and the campus remained under emergency conditions. Shortly after the shooting, the university began sending a series of text message alerts to students.

8 killed, including 6 kids, in W.Va. house fire

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP)—Alisha Carter-Camp had a new job, a wedding to plan and a 26th birthday to celebrate with a family cookout and toasts to the birthday girl in a yard full of children. By the end of the night, she was among eight dead, including six children, in

one of this West Virginia city's deadliest house fires in decades. The blaze tore through the two-story home while the family slept early Saturday, hours after the last guest had left Carter-Camp's party, authorities said. The dead children ranged from 18 months to 8. A seventh child, a 7-year-old boy, was hospitalized on life support. The cause was under investigation, although arson wasn't suspected, Charleston Mayor Danny Jones said. The fire started about 3:30 a.m. on the first floor.

AP: US says soldier split killing spree

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. investigators believe the U.S. soldier accused of killing 17 Afghan civilians split the slaughter into two episodes, returning to his base after the first attack and later slipping away to kill again, two American officials said Saturday. This scenario seems to support the U.S. government's assertion - contested by some Afghans - that the killings were done by one person, since they would have been perpetrated over a longer period of time than assumed when Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales was detained March 11 outside his base in southern Afghanistan. But it

also raises new questions about how Bales, who was formally charged Friday with 17 counts of premeditated murder and other crimes, could have carried out the nighttime attacks without drawing attention from any Americans on the Kandahar province base.

Iraqi woman severely beaten in Calif. home dies

EL CAJON, Calif. (AP)—A 32-year-old woman from Iraq who was found severely beaten next to a threatening note saying "go back to your country" died on Saturday. Hanif Mohebi, the director of the San Diego chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said he met with Shaima Alawadi's family members in the morning and was told that she was taken off life support around 3 p.m. Alawadi, a mother of five, had been hospitalized since her 17-year-old daughter found her unconscious Wednesday in the family's house in El Cajon, police Lt. Steve Shakowski said. The daughter, Fatima Al Himidi, told KUSI-TV her mother had been beaten on the head repeatedly with a tire iron, and that the note said "go back to your country, you terrorist."

Asia

Obama confronts nuke threat on N. Korea front line

By **BEN FELLER** and **ANNE GEARAN**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OBSERVATION POST OUELLETTE, South Korea (AP)—Razor-wire close to the border, President Barack Obama on Sunday paid his first visit to the tense zone separating North and South Korea amid new nuclear tensions. He told American troops stationed nearby they are protectors of “freedom’s frontier.”

Obama shook hands and spoke briefly in the dining hall at a U.S. military camp just outside the 2.5-mile-wide Demilitarized Zone, then walked into the heavily patrolled no-man’s land to tour a small post where South Korean forces patrol just 100 yards from the demarcation line.

The president, positioned behind bulletproof glass, peered through binoculars across the line that has bisected the Korean peninsula for 60 years. He spent about 10 minutes at the observation post, looking first toward North Korea, then back to the South.

It was an unmistakable show of force to communist North Korea and its new leader at a time of diplomatic standoff. Obama underscored the Cold War symbolism by making the tour his first order of business ahead of a gathering of world leaders pledged to keep nuclear materials safe. Nuclear-armed North Korea will not attend.

The U.S. is threatening to cancel planned food aid to the North over its announcement that it will launch a long-range rocket next month, news that overshadows the gathering of world leaders committed to nuclear security that Obama will attend in Seoul. Obama was holding bilateral talks with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak later in the day, followed by a news conference.

“I could not be prouder of what you’re doing,” Obama told smiling American troops at Camp Bonifas at the edge of the DMZ. Obama said the same is true at every U.S. military post, but “there’s something about this spot in particular.”

“You guys are ... at freedom’s frontier. When you think about



U.S. President Barack Obama, left, points towards North Korea from Observation Post Ouellette in the Demilitarized Zone, the tense military border between the two Koreas, in Panmunjom, South Korea, Sunday, March 25, 2012.

SKorea: NKorea moves rocket to launch site

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea has moved a long-range rocket to its northwestern launch site in preparation for a launch next month, South Korean officials said Sunday, as Pyongyang pushes ahead with plans that Washington says are a cover for testing long-range missile systems.

South Korean Defense Ministry and Joint Chiefs of Staff officials said Sunday that the information comes from the South Korean and U.S. militaries. They provided no further details and spoke on condition of anonymity citing department rules.

North Korea says it will launch a satellite into space on a long-range rocket around the April 15 celebration of the centennial of North Korea founder Kim Il Sun. Pyongyang says the launch is part of a peaceful space program.

The United States has warned that the launch

could jeopardize a recent deal that would ship U.S. food aid to the North in exchange for a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests.

Washington says North Korea uses such launches as cover for testing missile systems for nuclear weapons that could target Alaska and beyond.

Pyongyang’s launch plans are expected to dominate sideline discussions by U.S. President Barack Obama and other world leaders gathering in Seoul for a nuclear security summit. Obama visited the tense border separating the Koreas on Sunday.

The U.N. Security Council condemned North Korea’s last long-range rocket launch, in 2009. Pyongyang, which said it was testing satellite technology for peaceful purposes, abandoned six-nation nuclear disarmament talks and, weeks later, carried out a second nuclear test.

the transformation that has taken place in South Korea during my lifetime, it is directly attributable to this long line of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen who were willing to create the space and the opportunity for freedom and prosperity,” Obama said.

Obama’s visit takes place as North Koreans mark the end of the 100-day mourning period for longtime leader Kim Jong Il, who died of a heart attack in December. Since Kim’s death, son Kim Jong Un has been paying a series of high-profile visits to military units and made his

own trip to the “peace village” of Panmunjom inside the DMZ earlier this month.

“The contrast between South Korea and North Korea could not be clearer, could not be starker,” Obama told the troops.

That was a reference to the political freedom and prosperity in democratic South Korea, and the repression and desperate food shortages of the North.

In the midst of an election year focused on economic concerns at home, Obama has designed a rare Asia visit that features time in just one country. He’ll use much of the time to keep pres-

sure on North Korea to back off the planned rocket launch and return to disarmament talks.

The South Korean and U.S. militaries have found that North Korea has moved a long-range rocket to its northwestern launch site in preparation for its launch, South Korean Defense Ministry and Joint Chiefs of Staff officials said Sunday. The officials—speaking on condition of anonymity citing department rules—refused to provide further details.

Obama’s visit to the border separating the Korean peninsula is the fourth by a U.S. president. Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton

and George W. Bush all visited the DMZ; other U.S. officials regularly go there.

The border zone is a Cold War anachronism, a legacy of the uncertain armistice that ended the Korean War nearly 60 years ago. Hundreds of thousands of troops stand ready on both sides of the border zone, which is littered with land mines and encased in razor wire. Obama officials said the goal is to thank U.S. and South Korean military members and show U.S. resolve from “the front line of democracy” on the peninsula.

The United States has more than 28,000 troops in South Korea.

North Korea plans to launch a satellite using a long-range rocket next month, which the U.S. and other powers say would violate a U.N. ban on nuclear and missile activity because the same technology could be used for long-range missiles. Taken by surprise, the U.S. warned that a deal to resume stalled food aid to the North could be jeopardized if North Korea goes ahead.

The U.S. considers the rocket launch practice for a ballistic missile test and a violation of North Korea’s international responsibilities. The planned launch is yet another setback for the United States in years of on-again, off-again attempts to launch real negotiations.

Tang, the son of a wealthy businessman and former financial secretary with a reputation as a wine-loving playboy, was never popular with ordinary Hong Kong residents.

His scandals added to wider public discontent, driven by a yawning rich-poor gap and sky-high housing prices that have stirred resentment of the city’s billionaires, who control Hong Kong’s economy and vast real estate empires, and their perceived close ties with the government.

Hong Kong’s elite heed Beijing, pick Leung leader

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong’s elite elected a former government Cabinet member as the southern Chinese financial hub’s next leader on Sunday, heeding Beijing’s wishes and public opinion following a tumultuous, bitter race that highlighted public discontent.

Leung Chun-ying was declared the semiautonomous territory’s next chief executive by election officials after securing 689 votes from a 1,200-seat committee of business leaders and other elites.

Leung bowed deeply three times to election committee members and others watching the vote after his victory was declared.

Henry Tang, who was seen early on as Beijing’s choice be-

fore a string of gaffes and scandals torpedoed his already-low approval rating, received 285 votes. Pro-democracy candidate Albert Ho, who had no chance to win, got 76 votes.

Several hundred pro-democ-



Leung

racy protesters gathered outside the polling station, but were prevented from entering by police officers manning barricades.

Many committee members were expected to vote according to the wishes of China’s leaders. Leung’s victory reflects Beijing’s efforts in recent days to quietly signal that it was backing off from initial support of the deeply unpopular Tang.

Hong Kong, a former Brit-

ish colony that was returned to Chinese rule in 1997, is an unrestrained global capital of commerce with Western-style rights and freedoms not seen on the mainland. But it has never had full democracy, and Hong Kong’s 7.1 million residents had no say in the election.

The tumultuous race has heightened many Hong Kongers’ desire to directly elect their leader, which Beijing has promised could happen as early as 2017, although no road map has been laid out.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Ex-UN chief Annan to visit China for Syria talks

BELJING (AP)—China says former U.N. chief Kofi Annan will visit next week to discuss efforts to mediate an end to the crisis in Syria. Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei says Annan will visit China on Tuesday and Wednesday. Annan is a joint U.N.-Arab League envoy and will visit China after traveling to Russia. China and Russia have been chastised because they have twice vetoed U.N. resolutions criticizing Syrian President Bashar Assad’s regime for its bloody crackdown on opposition. Hong said in a statement Saturday that Annan would meet with Chinese leaders, but he did not name them. He said China attaches importance to Annan’s mediation efforts.

5 Pakistani troops, 12 militants killed in clashes

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistani intelligence officials say five army soldiers and 12 Taliban militants have been killed in clashes in the country’s northwest. The officials say the fighting took place Saturday near Wana, the main town in the South Waziristan tribal area, a Pakistani Taliban stronghold. Four soldiers were wounded. The army operation targeted Taliban fighters who on Friday dumped in the area the decapitated bodies of two paramilitary soldiers who had been abducted a few days earlier. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

Bomb kills 8 Afghans on patrol in south

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP) — A bomb exploded as a foot patrol of Afghan and NATO forces was passing by in the south of the country, killing eight Afghans and one international service member, an Afghan official said Sunday. The group was patrolling through Arghandab district in Kandahar province late Saturday when it was caught in the blast, said Shah Mohammad, the district administrator. Arghandab is a farming region just outside Kandahar city that has long been a bed-down area for Taliban insurgents. The Afghan dead included three police officers, four members of the Afghan “local police”—a government-sponsored militia force—and one translator, Mohammad said.

World

Amid chaos of uprising, crime wave hits Syria

By BASSEM MROUE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIRUT (AP)—Streets of Damascus that were crowded until late at night stand mostly empty after sunset as Syrians stay home, fearing robberies and kidnapping. After a year of chaos, a country that once boasted it was the safest in the Middle East is experiencing a surge in crime.

Reports of thefts, armed robberies and house break-ins have swelled, an apparent sign of criminals taking advantage of the turmoil as the regime of President Bashar Assad wages a bloody, nationwide crackdown against an opposition demanding his ouster.

The government blames members of the opposition or army defectors for much of the crime. The opposition, in turn, blames the regime, saying it is allowing the lawlessness so it can tell the public that the uprising has brought chaos.

But it may be that security forces are now too distracted. Syria's 17 security and intelligence agencies used to control the country with an iron fist, and crime was rare as many feared the regime's brutality. Several pardons issued by Assad over the past year as a gesture to the opposition are believed to have freed criminals—including convicted murderers and thieves—alongside some political prisoners.

Whatever the cause, Damascus residents say criminals are operating with unprecedented boldness.

A woman who lives in the



This image made from amateur video and released by Shaam News Network Saturday, March 24, 2012, purports to show smoke rising after rockets fell in the Khaldiye area of Homs, Syria.

posh Damascus neighborhood of Tijara recounted a harrowing armed robbery against her family that she said took place earlier this month. At 6 in the evening, three gunmen with automatic weapons banged on their apartment door while her mother and 8-year-old brother were home alone. The brother opened the door and the assailants stormed in, she told The Associated Press by phone from the Syrian capital.

The gunmen held a gun to the boy's head and told the mother they would shoot unless she handed over her jewelry and cash, the woman said. Her mother gave them all her jewelry and

cash worth about \$30,000. The gunmen forced the mother and son into a bedroom, tied their hands, locked them in and then fled, said the woman.

"This is the first such case in this neighborhood in 15 years," she said the police told her. The woman spoke on condition of anonymity for fear the criminals might harm members of her family.

Another Damascus resident said a neighbor—a wealthy, pro-government businessman in his late 40s—was kidnapped while going to work and was only released after his family paid a ransom worth \$300,000. After the December kidnapping

the man left Syria along with his wife and children. The resident also spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of making herself a target.

In the central city of Homs, a resident told the AP that gunmen knocked on the door of his neighbor, put a pistol in his face and said to him, "Give us the keys of your car."

The man said the gunmen drove away. The Homs resident, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said his neighbor still lives in fear.

Damascus residents say that many people who own luxury cars keep them at home and move around in

taxis in order for them not to have their cars stolen.

Homs resident Wael, 27, said crime has doubled in some restive neighborhoods because "there is no security and people are now behaving as they want."

"In the past, we used to sleep with our windows open. Now, we cannot do that," said Wael, who asked that he only be identified with his first name.

Iyad al-Bunni, 58, a merchant from Damascus, said the absence of stability and security has allowed thieves to thrive. "Armed groups are using the security vacuum to carry out acts of looting," he said.

Pinning down the extent of the rise in crime is difficult, in part because of the potential for violence connected to the uprising and the regime's crackdown to get mixed in with nonpolitical crime. The regime denies the existence of an uprising, saying it faces not a popular revolt but violence from "terrorists"—so it likely includes deaths connected to political violence in its crime rate.

The revolt began a year ago with peaceful protests against Assad around the country that were met with gunfire.

Since then, violence has spiraled. Some rebels have taken up arms, attacking army positions and reportedly gunning down pro-regime figures. Security forces have besieged entire cities or rebellious neighborhoods, hammering residential areas with artillery. Pro-regime militiamen known as Shabiha have targeted suspected opposition supporters. Tit-for-tat sectarian killings have taken place between majority Sunnis, who largely back the opposition, and minority Alawites, who stand by the regime.

The United Nations estimates that 8,000 people have been killed in the violence surrounding the uprising.

The Damascus general prosecutor, Marwan Louji, told the pro-government daily Baladana in January that "political, terrorist and normal" crime in the capital doubled in 2011 compared to the previous year. He said theft shot up between 50 to 100 percent. He did not otherwise elaborate.

Chavez travels to Cuba for radiation treatment

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez flew to Cuba late Saturday to begin radiation therapy one month after undergoing surgery that removed a cancerous tumor.

Chavez will be in Cuba at the same time as Pope Benedict XVI, who arrives on the communist-governed island on Monday after a visit to Mexico. But Chavez didn't refer to the pope's upcoming visit to Havana.

The 57-year-old president describes himself as a Christian. He has regularly clashed with Roman Catholic leaders in Venezuela, but during his illness has often publicly expressed faith in God that he will overcome cancer.

Chavez said the radiation treatments are to begin right away on Sunday. He has been recovering from a Feb. 26 surgery in Havana that he said removed a tumor from the same spot in his pelvic region where another tumor was extracted eight months earlier.

"I've decided, on the recom-

mendation of my medical team and also my government political team, to begin ... radiation therapy treatment," Chavez said in a televised meeting with aides Saturday. He described it as a "complement to the surgery that I underwent."

"Yesterday, they took out the last stitches that were left from the operation. Everything's very good. I've been walking much better. ... Without any sort of complication, thanks to God," he said. "And now, a month after the operation, we're ready for radiation therapy, which will last about four, five weeks."

At Caracas' international airport Saturday night, Chavez held the hand of one of his daughters as he walked past soldiers standing at attention.

"I'll be back in a few days," he said. "You should know that radiation therapy is for various days, and after that a break, and after that other days and another break. So I'm going to be going and coming. It's possible that

we may do some of the sessions here in Venezuela. We're evaluating it. What's most important, whether its there or here, is the effectiveness of the treatment."

Chavez has not identified the type of cancer nor the precise location where the tumors have been removed.

After he was diagnosed with cancer in Cuba last year, Chavez underwent an initial surgery in June that removed a tumor the size of a baseball.

He then had four rounds of chemotherapy and said tests showed no signs of any cancerous cells. But last month, he announced he was returning to Cuba for surgery to remove a lesion that proved to be malignant. He has described the most recent tumor as measuring about 2 centimeters (0.8 inches).

Chavez had said earlier this month that he would undergo radiation therapy but had not given details about when it would begin or where he would be treated.

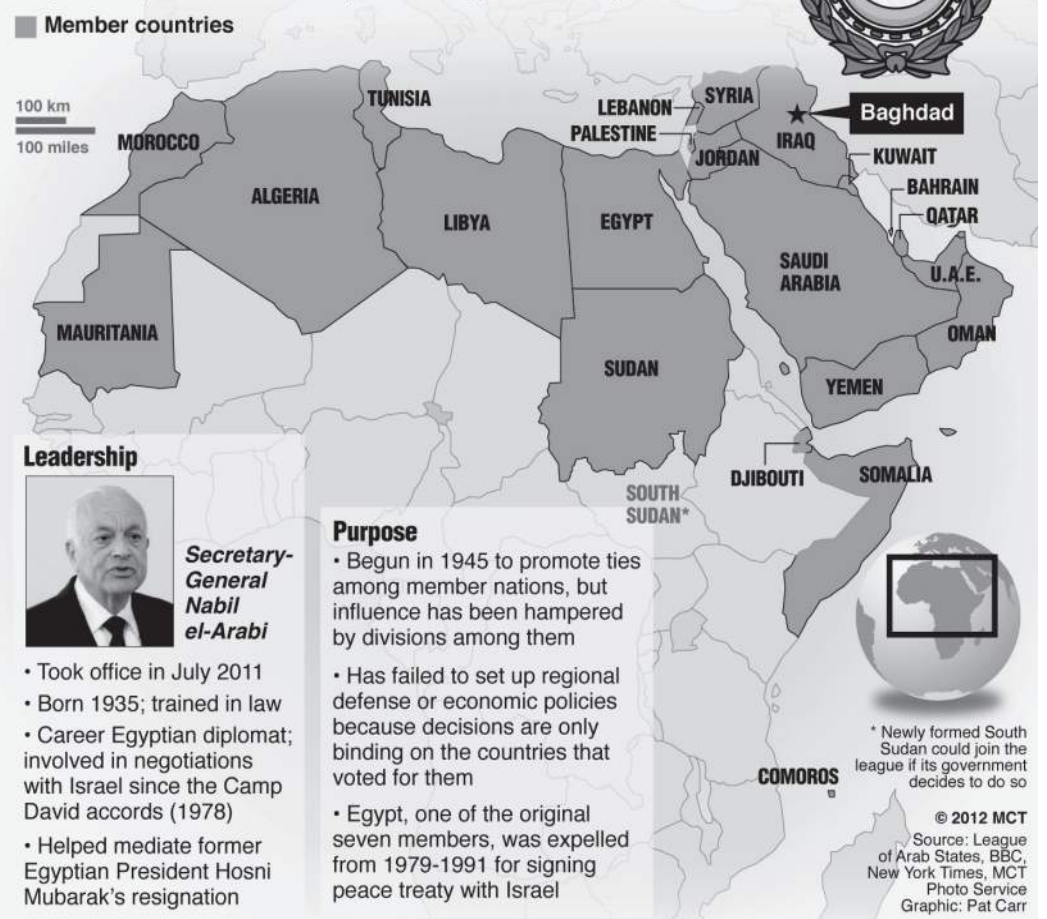
Chavez is running for re-election in October and vows that his illness will not get in the way of that political goal.



Chavez

Arab League summit

The 23rd Arab League summit, the first since 1990 — just after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait — will be held in Baghdad March 27. The trouble in Syria is expected to be at the top of the foreign ministers' agenda.



Focus

Afghan father tries to cope with shooting rampage



Afghan villagers pray over the grave of one of the sixteen victims killed in a shooting rampage in the Panjwai district of Kandahar province south of Kabul, Afghanistan, Saturday, March 24, 2012. AP

By HEIDI VOGT and MIRWAIS KHAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARMARA, Afghanistan (AP)—Mohammad Wazir can barely take a sip of water because it reminds him of his 7-year-old daughter, who brought him a glass three days before she was killed with 10 other loved ones in a shooting spree allegedly carried out by a U.S. soldier in southern Afghanistan.

Wazir said he had asked his wife for a drink but his daughter Masooma brought it instead.

“She said: ‘Ask me, daddy. I can bring you water too,’” Wazir recalled. “She was the beauty of my house. She had black magical eyes.”

Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales was charged Friday with 17 counts of premeditated murder and could face a possible death penalty if convicted. But that has done little to ease the pain of those left behind, who are demanding justice as they struggle to rebuild their shattered lives.

While no motive for the killings has been proffered, much of the discussion in the U.S. has focused on what could have caused the soldier to snap and whether the trauma of warfare and multiple deployments is at least partly to blame. Bales, himself a father of two from Lake Tapps, Washington, has been confined at the U.S. military prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Bales also was charged with six counts of attempted murder and six counts of assault in the March 11 pre-dawn massacre in Balandi and Alkozai, two southern Afghanistan villages near his base in Panjwai district of Kandahar Province, the birthplace of the Taliban.

The maximum punishment for a premeditated murder conviction is death,

dishonorable discharge from the armed forces, reduction to the lowest enlisted grade and total forfeiture of pay and allowances, according to Col. Gary Kolb, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan. The mandatory minimum sentence is life imprisonment with the chance of parole.

The charges offered few details of what happened that night. But the 38-year-old soldier is accused of walking off his base with his 9mm pistol and M-4 rifle, which was outfitted with a grenade launcher, killing four men, four women, two boys and seven girls and burning some of the bodies. The ages of the children were not disclosed.

In the most detailed descriptions of the shootings to date, the charges say Bales shot a young girl in the head, a young boy in the thigh, a man in the neck and a woman in the chest and groin. The documents also say that he “shot at” another girl and boy, but apparently did not hit them.

Afghan officials and villagers have counted 16 dead: 12 in Balandi and four in Alkozai. The U.S. military has charged Bales with 17 murders without explaining the discrepancy.

Wazir—who also lost his wife, five other children ages 2 to 15, his mother, his brother, his sister-in-law and his nephew—said he would travel to the U.S. for the trial if given the opportunity but the death penalty for just one man would not be enough. The only child he has left is his 4-year-old son Habib, who was with him in another town when the shootings occurred.

“They took everything from me,” he said.

Wazir, who is in his mid-thirties and splits his time tending his grape fields and helping with a family electronics store, was not home in Balandi that night because he had taken his youngest son to the nearby border town of Spin Boldak to have dinner with his cousins. The area is dangerous so Wazir and his son spent the night. As they were getting ready to return home in the morning, Wazir got a phone call.

The caller said Wazir’s house had been the target of a U.S. attack and some relatives had been injured, but didn’t mention any dead. He rushed home to find hundreds of people gathered outside around some bodies that they were preparing take to Kandahar city for a funeral.

“I didn’t know that all of them were members of my family,” Wazir recounted as he sat in a friend’s courtyard in the nearby market town of Harmara, where he is staying to avoid the ghosts waiting for him at home. As he spoke, he stared down at his hands, focusing on the knife tattoo on his right knuckles.

People tried to pull him into the crowd but he said he needed to check on his family first.

“Then one of my relatives hugged me and said, ‘Nobody is there for you to talk to.’”

Still disbelieving, Wazir ran to his house and found the kitchen still filled with smoke, ashes and blood.

“I was crying and I said to my uncle, ‘Tell me, is anyone in my family alive?’ And my uncle said, ‘It is God’s will. Pull yourself together and come out.’”

Neighbors told him they had heard

the gunshots but were too afraid to leave their homes. When the shooting stopped and they entered his house, they found corpses on fire. Wazir and his fellow villagers buried his family, then Wazir went to the Afghan capital, Kabul, to tell President Hamid Karzai his story.

Afghan officials have made payments to all the families as compensation for the deaths, but Wazir said he’s looking for justice, and he’s not sure that the Americans are really interested in finding out what happened.

He’s suspicious, he explained, because U.S. forces said from the very beginning that only one shooter was involved, even though some accounts suggested multiple attackers. Wazir himself still thinks it is likely others were involved.

“It shows that they are not interested in the truth. At least they should wait for an investigation,” Wazir said. “They claim that it is one person who did it, if that is the case they have to prove it.”

Wazir says his two elder sons, 15-year-old Asmatullah and 9-year-old Faizullah, were both in school. Asmatullah was more responsible, but Faizullah was the clever one. He thought Faizulla might become a doctor some day.

Then he brought up his 2-year-old daughter, Palwasha, and his eyes brimmed over with tears.

“I can still feel her small hands on

my face and feel her pulling my beard,” Wazir said as he cried and shivered in the warm air. “Even when I saw her burned body, she still had that beautiful smile.”

While Wazir lost the largest number of family members, other villagers also are dealing with the trauma two weeks after the deadly rampage.

Baran Akhon, whose brother Mohammad Dawood was also killed in Balandi, said he’s not sure how he is going to support his brother’s family. He has brought all of them to live with him in Kandahar city, but he barely makes enough selling cigarettes and other small items from his pushcart to support his own family.

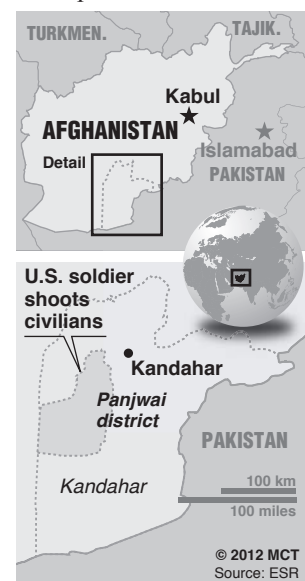
Another man whose wife, cousin, brother and 3-year-old granddaughter were killed in the neighboring village of Alkozai said people there are too scared

to sleep alone, so they cram as many people into one house as possible each night. Saeed Jan also complained that U.S. troops continue to patrol the area.

“There is still blood in our houses. It hasn’t been removed. And they are moving through our streets again. It’s like they are pushing us, just showing that they can,” Jan said.

He also says monetary payouts will not suffice.

“Even millions of dollars would not be enough for my brother. First they should give us justice and punish all the people who did this,” Akhon said.



Life & Style

Anti-bullying teen, 'DWTS,' Gaga get GLAAD award

NEW YORK (AP)—A teenager who's campaigning to make it easier for children to see an upcoming documentary about bullying, the producers of the NBC musical drama "Smash" and Lady Gaga were

among the winners of Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation media awards announced Saturday.

ABC's "Dancing With The Stars," the popular Spanish-language TV programs "Caso

Cerrado" and "Primer Impacto," and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tony Kushner's recent work "The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures" also were

among the honorees recognized at a ceremony in New York. GLAAD is set to present more awards in Los Angeles in April and San Francisco in June.

The awards are designed to honor fair, accurate and inclu-

sive representation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Katy Butler, a 17-year-old from Ann Arbor, Mich., got a special award for gathering more than 400,000 sig-

natures on an online petition pressing the Motion Picture Association of America to lower its R rating for "Bully," a documentary set for release Friday. The MPAA has said language used in the film warrants restricting children under 17 from seeing it without an adult.

Craig Zadan and Neil Meron were honored for their careers, which include producing "Smash" and the films "Hair-spray" and "Chicago."

Among awards for specific works, "Pariah," writer-director Dee Rees' movie about an African-American teenager struggling to come out as a lesbian, was named the outstanding limited-release film. Ricky Martin, The New York Times and a Boston Globe story about a transgender teenager and her identical twin brother, written by Bella English, also got laurels in various categories.

Honors for Spanish-language work included awards for episodes of "Caso Cerrado" and "Primer Impacto" and for a story, by Claudia Torrens of The Associated Press, about a Hispanic gay couple planning to marry and become fathers of twins, with the help of a surrogate mother.

Aretha Franklin celebrates 70th, talks new music

NEW YORK (AP)—Aretha Franklin has a lot more than her 70th birthday to celebrate: She's reuniting with one of her musical mentors, Clive Davis, for a new album.

In an interview at her swanky birthday party on Saturday, Franklin said she and Davis, who helped engineer her comeback in the 1980s, would be working on new music.

"I have re-signed with Clive Davis, so I'm recording with Clive again," said Franklin of the music mogul, who is associated with Sony Music Entertainment.

Franklin said that after Davis' birthday next month, "we're going to sit together and decide what it is we're going to record."

Davis sat next to Franklin for most of the night at the soiree at the Helmsley Park Lane Hotel, which included a sit-down din-

ner, a dance performance and a mini-concert that featured rising jazz pianist Kris Bowers.

Other guests included Diane Sawyer, Rev. Al Sharpton, and Willie Wilkerson, Franklin's longtime companion and briefly this year her fiancé.

Wilkerson stood by Franklin's side as she cut her three-tier, lime-green birthday cake while the crowd serenaded her with Stevie Wonder's version of "Happy Birthday."

When asked whether marriage might once again be in her future, the Queen of Soul simply said: "We'll see what happens."

As far as future work-related plans, she was looking forward to performances in California and said she was helping negotiate a record contract for her grandson. Her planned biopic is on hold. "It's in a limbo position," she said. "It's just a lot

going on."

Franklin said she planned to spend her actual birthday—Sunday—relaxing with a paper, her feet up and watching TV.

But Saturday night, she hung out with friends long after the party's designated end time.

At one point, she joked that she was turning back the hands of time.

"I was wondering, 'What is it going to be like to be 50?' I can tell you now it feels like 40," she said as the crowd laughed.

She then made reference to the film "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," about a man who gets younger as he ages.

"So remember Benjamin Buttons?" she said. "Ree Ree Buttons!"

Aretha Franklin attends her seventieth birthday party in New York, Saturday, March 24, 2012. AP



Message of Appreciation

We, the family of

Valeria "Betty" Blau

November 20, 1947 – March 19, 2012

wish to express our greatest appreciation for your comforting support and prayers during our time of bereavement. Words cannot express our gratitude and we extend our appreciation to the staff of CHC, DPW, Saipan Mayor's Office, Congressman Palacios, Congressman Sablan, Congressman Basa, Borja Funeral Home, and our many friends and family members who have expressed various forms of support and prayer throughout the mourning of our loved one. Loss is never easy or readily accepted but the kindness and support that we have received certainly makes this time of bereavement a lot less difficult.

Susana Blau, Children and Grandchildren



Wedding crasher: UK queen drops in on ceremony

LONDON (AP)—Britain's Queen Elizabeth II has become a wedding crasher.

The monarch dropped in moments after the nuptials of John and Frances Canning at Manchester Town Hall in northern England on Friday.

The newlyweds said Saturday the queen chatted and posed for wedding photographs. The queen and her husband

Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, were visiting the venue for lunch at the same time the wedding took place.

"It was very special—it was so lovely that she took the trouble to speak to us," bride Frances Canning told The Sun newspaper.

The 48-year-old groom knew beforehand that the queen would be visit-

ing the town hall, and jokingly wrote to Buckingham Palace to invite the monarch, the tabloid reported. He received a polite reply declining the invitation, but palace officials secretly arranged the meeting, the paper said.

Canning said he spoke with Prince Philip while photos were being taken.

"He was a charming fella—for me

it was the icing on the cake," he told The Sun.

The 44-year-old bride was impressed the queen addressed them by their first names.

"She said I looked lovely and she wanted to wish us all the best for the future.

"We're going to have to get a bigger wedding album now," she was quoted

as saying. "Not many people will have pictures like that."

The British monarch was in Manchester to visit a number of sites, including a new BBC headquarters building in nearby Salford, as part of her Diamond Jubilee tour. The queen is celebrating the six decades since she ascended to the throne in 1952.

Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson set for WWE return

By **DAN GELSTON**
AP SPORTS WRITER

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Dwayne Johnson's latest movie just topped \$300 million in worldwide grosses. He's laid the smack down on Hollywood and become an in-demand action star for hire.

But the next time someone barks, "Action!" Johnson will slip back into his most famous role yet: The trash-talking, trail-blazing, jabroni-beating wrestler known simply as The Rock.

Think an established superstar actor like Brad Pitt would risk getting his teeth knocked out for a run in sports entertainment?

The Rock, who rose to stardom in the wrestling business, says there's nowhere else he'd rather drop The People's Elbow than in the ring. The Rock returns to the WWE for his first WrestleMania match since 2004 when he headlines the April 1 card against former champion John Cena at Sun Life Stadium in Miami.

For a company once home to Hulk Hogan and "Stone Cold" Steve Austin, this bout is as close as it gets to a dream match. Catchphrase-chanting, die-hard pro wrestling lovers are revved up about the return of The Great One. Casual fans, too.

"I came back to put on the biggest match of all time," Johnson said. "That's all I want to do. There's no one I can do that with right now other than John. He's far and above everyone else in terms of popularity. He's the guy. Is he Stone Cold? No. Is he Hogan? No. But he is John Cena and he's been on



In this Feb. 16, 2012 file photo, World Wrestling Entertainment personality Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson speaks at a news conference in East Rutherford, N.J.

top for a long time now."

Johnson reigned in that top spot at the end of the 1990s and the early part of the last decade before embarking on an impressive run in Hollywood. His current film, "Journey 2: The Mysterious Island," grossed \$95 million in its first six weeks domestically and reached \$300 million worldwide. His previous movie, "Fast Five," made more than \$210 million in domestic grosses, proving that Johnson knows how to rock the box office.

All that big-ticket drawing power is why the WWE believes he can attract

more than a million pay-per-view buys (at \$54.95 a pop) in his return singles match.

"They know that I'm back, not for money, not because I like being on the road, but because I love the business," Johnson said. "The energy level is different this time around, the connection is more emotional this time around."

Sitting in the Wells Fargo Center seats hours before 18,088 fans packed the place for Monday's live "Raw," Johnson reflected on a career that took him from \$40 paydays and Waffle House meals to his choice of top movie

roles and a lavish \$3.4 million pad in South Florida.

His stories are interrupted by visits from today's WWE crew. Sheamus, a rising WWE star, had a brief chat with The Rock.

"Great match on Friday," Rock says. "I texted Chris (Jericho) on Friday. You guys killed it. That boot at the end, that was awesome."

Sheamus smiles and appreciates the feedback.

"Thank you, Rock."

The Rock says, if the boys in the back are resentful he slid into the main event without toiling 200-plus days last year on the road, he hasn't noticed.

"The best part of me coming back is hearing them say, 'You've inspired me, thank you,'" Johnson said. "That's the greatest compliment that I can get. It's so cool man. They don't talk about movies. They don't talk about other matches. It's just, 'You've inspired me.'"

On screen, Cena has a contrasting take.

"I was a fan in '99. I'm not a fan now," Cena said. "I don't know what he's got going on upstairs."

The Rock returned to Vince McMahon's empire last year as WrestleMania's guest host, but couldn't help but get physical in the main event. He dropped his finishing move, The Rock Bottom, on Cena which allowed WWE champion The Miz to get the pin and retain his title. The next night on "Raw," Cena and Rock agreed to a bout for this year's signature event, a bold and risky yearlong push for a company where real injuries often fracture fantasy storylines.

Johnson's return boosted WrestleMania's buy rate to 1,042,000 worldwide - the first time it topped a million in three years and seventh time overall.

The Rock wrestled for the first time in 7 1/2 years when he teamed with Cena at November's Survivor Series

pay-per-view against Miz and R-Truth.

The temporary alliance disintegrated and the duo have engaged in verbal battles for most of the last two months. Cena tweaked Rock's catchphrases in a rap song. Rock strummed the guitar and sang his own tune about where he wants to stick his boots at Wrestlemania. The two have gone back-and-forth on Twitter. It's a unique twist on hype - far removed from the ferociousness of Roddy Piper bashing Jimmy Snuka's head with a coconut.

"We've been griping like two little kids now for about a year," Cena said. "Now, everybody wants to see us fight."

Cena and Rock top a card that includes WWE champion CM Punk vs. Chris Jericho, "Triple H" Hunter Hearst Helmsley vs. the Undertaker in a steel cage, and Beth Phoenix and Eve Torres vs. Kelly Kelly and "Extra" co-host and current "Dancing With the Stars" contestant Maria Menounos.

Like Johnson, Jericho has found mainstream success as an author, lead singer of the band "Fozzy," and reality TV and awards show host. Jericho said few people have Johnson's oversized personality to transition into all forms of entertainment.

"I know just how much firepower Rock has," Jericho said. "I think people forget sometimes how good he is."

Fans have tuned in, though not quite in the monster numbers of Johnson's "Attitude Era" heyday. The March 12 "Raw," averaged 4.82 million viewers (4.97 million watched the second hour of the show) which bested the highest-rated NCAA tournament cable game, Kansas vs. Purdue (4.43 million viewers).

Johnson has committed to appearing at next year's WrestleMania at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. In what role, he hasn't said.

It's clear if the WWE wants to squeeze another potential blockbuster buy rate out of the Rock, the last man standing to get the headline match would be the return of former WWE and UFC heavyweight champion Brock Lesnar.

How about it: Brock vs. Rock at WrestleMania 29?

"I'm not saying a thing," said a laughing, grinning Rock, eyebrow raised. "I didn't say anything."

The Rock silenced. That's a first.

Before Johnson can map out a storyline for next year's WrestleMania, there are more movies to shoot. He just wrapped, "G.I. Joe: Retaliation," and begins filming Michael Bay's "Pain & Gain," with Mark Wahlberg on April 3. He also has starring roles lined up for "Fast Six," and "Hercules."

Johnson would like to shed the invincible hero role for once and grapple with a meatier, dramatic role.

"A role like that will come," he said. "I can't wait for that to come, by the way. We'll develop things. I'm patient."

He won't have to wait much longer for WrestleMania.

"He wants to be No. 1, so do I," Cena said. "So go at it boys, and see what happens."

Newly discovered Mozart piece performed

VIENNA (AP)—A piano work experts attribute to Mozart as a child prodigy was performed for the first time Friday since it was found last year after apparently being left in an attic for centuries.

The lively 84-bar passage—marked "allegro molto," or "very quick"—was played Friday on the composer's piano in a room of his Salzburg home by virtuoso Florian Birsack.

The Mozarteum Salzburg Foundation, which staged the event, said the manuscript was found last summer as part of a 160-page book of handwritten piano music as the musty attic of a house in Tyrol was being cleared from centuries of detritus.

Part of a collection of notes from a village music teacher, the book was dated 1780—24 years after Mozart was born—and the manuscript played Friday bore the name "Del Signore Giovane Wolfgang Mozart," Italian for "Mr. Wolfgang Mozart Jr."

Musicologist Hildegard Hermann-Schneider, who traced the composition to Mozart, said the fact that other pieces in the book were known works by Mozart's father, Leopold, strengthened the



Pianist Florian Birsack plays on a piano forte during a press conference held by the research department of the International Mozarteum Foundation in Salzburg, Austria, Friday, March 23, 2012.

case that the work was genuine. As well, Leopold Mozart often used "Wolfgang" when labeling works written by his young son, she said.

From the style of the composition, Hermann-Schneider attributed it to Mozart at around the age of 11.

The piece exhibits "a series of components that are found repeatedly in other Mozart piano works," said the Mozarteum in a statement. "Judging by the current level of knowledge, it thus has to be a genuine sonata phrase from Mozart."

Cameron's sub makes successful unmanned test dive



Cameron

HONOLULU (AP)—A submarine that will take “Titanic” director James Cameron to the Earth’s deepest point has made a successful unmanned test dive.

Cameron tells National Geographic News that his specially designed submarine called *Deepsea Challenger* complet-

ed the nearly 7-mile test dive Wednesday. The team returned to calmer waters and was headed back to the site Saturday.

If all goes well, he’ll spend about six hours exploring and filming the bottom of the Mariana Trench, about 200 miles southwest of the Pacific island

of Guam.

Swiss engineer Jacques Piccard and U.S. Navy Capt. Don Walsh are the only other men to reach the spot. They spent about 20 minutes there during their 1960 dive but couldn’t see much after their sub kicked up sand from the sea floor.

‘Hunger Games’ serves up huge opening day at \$68M

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The feast is on: “The Hunger Games” has taken in \$68.25 million domestically in its first day, a record for a non-sequel.

The Friday total for Lions-

gate’s “The Hunger Games” was the fifth-best opening day ever and puts the movie on track for the best debut weekend ever in March. That record is held by “Alice in Wonderland” with

\$116.1 million.

The big start should translate into an opening weekend of as much as \$140 million domestically, according to Paul Dergarabedian, analyst for box-office

tracker Hollywood.com.

First-day revenues for “The Hunger Games” were well behind the record \$91.1 million for last summer’s “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2.” But “The Hunger Games” came within a few million dollars of each of the last three “Twilight” movies, whose opening days ranged from \$68.5 million to \$72.7 million.

“The Hunger Games” stars Jennifer Lawrence as a teen forced to compete in a televised death match against other youths in a future North American society where a privileged capital city oppresses the people of 12 outlying worker districts. The film is based on the first book in a best-selling trilogy by author Suzanne Collins.



AP

In this image released by Lionsgate, Jennifer Lawrence portrays Katniss Everdeen, left, and Liam Hemsworth portrays Gale Hawthorne in a scene from “The Hunger Games.”

Houston full autopsy report to offer more details

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Whitney Houston’s full autopsy report may offer more clues about whether the singer suffered a heart attack before her drowning death, officials said Friday.

The full report, which is expected to be released in a few weeks, may include test results and physical descriptions of the singer’s heart that will show whether she suffered a heart attack, Assistant Chief Coroner Ed Winter said. The report is being compiled and Winter said he did not have access to its findings, which might show whether there were any obvious signs such as discoloration



Houston

of her heart that would suggest Houston had a heart attack before slipping underwater in a bathtub at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Feb. 11.

Houston’s death has been ruled an accidental drowning, with heart disease and cocaine use listed as contributing factors.

The report also will include detailed toxicology results that will show how much cocaine and its byproducts were in Houston’s system when

she died. Coroner’s officials said Thursday that the results showed the singer used cocaine shortly before her death, and there were indications of chronic use.

Beverly Hills police detectives will use the full coroner’s report to complete their investigative file, which is not expected to be publicly released. The department has said there were no signs of foul play in connection with Houston’s death.

Houston’s death on the eve

of the Grammy Awards stunned the music industry and fans worldwide. The singer had battled addiction for years, but friends and family have said she appeared committed to making a comeback in the months before her death.

“We are saddened to learn of the toxicology results, although we are glad to now have closure,” Patricia Houston, the singer’s sister-in-law and manager, wrote in a statement to The Associated Press on Thursday.

Tori Spelling announces she’s pregnant—again

NEW YORK (AP)—Hopefully she didn’t pack away her maternity clothes. Reality TV star, actress and author Tori Spelling is pregnant again.

Spelling and her husband, Dean McDermott, have three children together, including a daughter, Hattie, born in October. They have another daughter, Stella, and a son, Liam. McDermott also has a son from a previous marriage.

The 38-year-old Spelling made the announcement on her website Friday by saying: “Baby makes 6!” and her family is “beyond thrilled” to announce “another little McDermott is on the way!”

Tori, Dean and their children can be seen on their Oxygen reality show, “Tori & Dean: Home Sweet Hollywood.”



AP

In this July 7, 2011 file photo, actress Tori Spelling, left, and actor Dean McDermott arrive at the premiere of the feature film “Gun Hill Road” in Los Angeles.

Car booster seats are right choice for small children

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: What do you think of a grandmother who has her 7-year-old grandson sit in a baby car seat when she’s driving? The boy weighs 65 pounds and is 4 1/2 feet tall. His parents don’t want to cause a rift with her, as she helps them after school. He looks ridiculous and must feel embarrassed in front of his friends. Should relatives intervene?

GRANNY’S NEIGHBOR

Dear Abby

DEAR NEIGHBOR: I took your question to a public affairs specialist with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. He said that children through the age of 12 should always ride in the back seat. He also reminded me that seat belts were designed for adults, not children.

According to the NHTSA, the 7-year-old should be in a “booster” seat. A booster seat positions the seat belt so it fits properly over the shoulder and chest—the strongest parts of the child’s body—so it won’t cut him or her on the neck or face in case of an accident.

The NHTSA used to recommend that children 8 to 12 years old or 4 feet 9 inches and under use a booster seat. However, it NOW recommends that parents visit its website, www.nhtsa.gov, to choose a correct seat. Click on the child safety section, and you’ll find an area titled “Which Car Seat Is the Right One for Your Child.” There are also videos in this section showing parents how to install the seats correctly.

The recommendations are national and do not vary among the states. And yes—this information should be shared with the child’s parents and the grandmother in order to ensure the boy’s safety.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: At the age of 2, I was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. I have been involved with the American Diabetes Association since I was 6. As its 2012 National Youth Advocate, I’d like to invite your readers to join me by participating in the 24th Annual American Diabetes Association Alert Day tomorrow, March 27.

Alert Day, held on the fourth Tuesday in March, is a one-day “wake-up call.” On that day, the American public is invited to take the Diabetes Risk Test to find out if they are at risk for developing Type 2 diabetes. It’s a serious disease that strikes nearly 26 million children and adults in the United States. Many of them don’t know they have it.

Unfortunately, people are often diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes seven to 10 years after it has settled in their system. By then, the major symptoms have already developed and harmed the body, so early diagnosis is critical.

Please urge your readers to “Take it. Share it.” Let them know they can protect their health and stop this disease by taking the free risk test. Just answer a few simple questions and share the fact with everyone you care about that there is a test. If they take it, they could be saving lives.

LOGAN NICOLE GREGORY, 2012 A.D.A. NATIONAL YOUTH ADVOCATE

DEAR LOGAN: Congratulations on your selection as the 2012 National Youth Advocate. Readers, because diabetes is a serious—but manageable—condition, and there are simple ways to find out if you could be at risk, please pay attention to Logan’s message. Visit the American Diabetes Association Facebook page, go to stopdiabetes.com or call 800-342-2383.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: “Abby’s Favorite Recipes” and “More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby.” Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

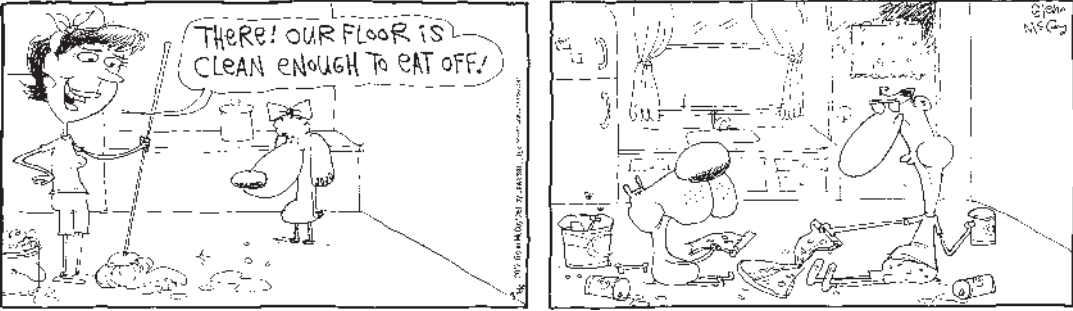
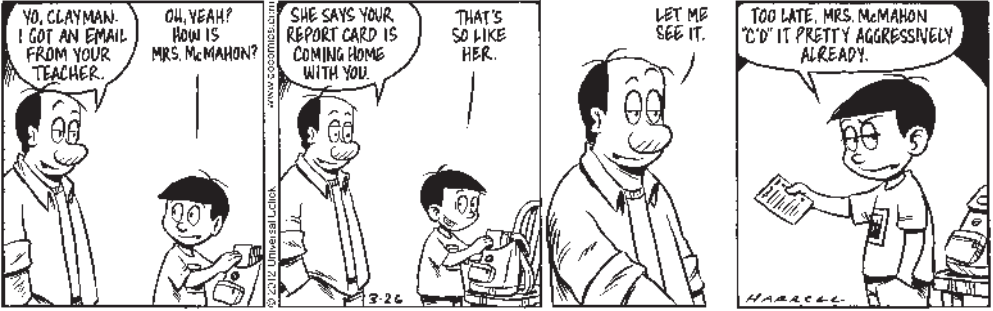


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 — -Wan Kenobi

4 Health resort

7 Recording venue

11 Swimming

13 Luminox

14 Thing

15 Opposed to

16 Buddy

17 Options list

18 Rife with foliage

20 Toothpaste container

22 Hearing organ

24 Shoe without laces

28 Sleepwear

32 Trap

33 Verve

34 Wrinkly-faced dog

36 Faucet problem

37 Gives temporarily

39 "The Big Bang Theory" star Jim

DOWN

1 October

43 Swab the floors

44 Way out

46 Stretchy candy

50 Pop singer

53 To and —

55 Col.

56 Settled down

57 Legislation

58 Into the sunrise

59 Big party

60 Storm center

61 Next-to-last Greek letter

21 Derek and Diddle

23 Knock

25 Gambling game

26 Ms. Brocovich

27 Agents, for short

28 Riches

29 Sheltered

30 Tarzan's wife

31 Dine

35 Leg, slangily

38 Gender

40 Deterioration

42 Winchester or Springfield

45 Salver

47 Envelope part

48 Commotion

49 Bigfoot's cousin

50 Talk on and on

51 Chicken — king

52 Our soldiers

54 Have bills

Solution time: 24 mins.

SMEAR PLAIN
STOGIE HORNET
AURORA AUTHOR
NAG SPEND ACE
DRUM SST SLOE
STEEP COMMEND
LAD MOO
INDEXED ACTED
SERIE SOL KENO
ABA WIELD NAN
AUPAIR AUTUMN
CLEESE MONROE
ASSES ASIEH

Saturday's answer 3-26

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Keira Knightley, 27; Kenny Chesney, 44; Martin Short, 62; Steven Tyler, 64.

Happy Birthday: Recall people from your past and reconnect with those you feel can contribute to what you want to accomplish this year. Someone will help you bring out your best attributes and work them into a plan or project that leads to your advancement. Trust in your abilities and move forward with confidence. Your numbers are 4, 6, 11, 22, 30, 37, 41.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keep your thoughts private to avoid giving the wrong impression. More intentionality regarding your accomplishments and work ethic will lead to interesting developments and advancement. Strive for perfection and you'll acquire satisfaction. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Keep everything in perspective, especially partnerships. Contribute openly to your interests and you will meet people able to help you reach your goals. A business trip will bring gratification if you share your intentions and plans. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Collect old debts. Discuss plans to build your assets. Don't leave anything to chance, especially when it comes to money, home and family matters. A realistic assessment of your current situation will help you stick to a plan that is workable. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Spend more time with people who share your interests and concerns. Collaborating with people just as dedicated as you are will lead

to success and advancement. Work in partnership, especially in fixing up your surroundings or environment. Love is highlighted. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Step back and assess before taking action. Overreacting or taking on more than you can handle will not bode well when dealing with personal responsibilities. Take time to nurture your relationships. A change of scenery will do you good. **

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Embrace whatever you face wholeheartedly. Your willpower and quality control will pay off. There is much to be learned and plenty to gain from any encounter. Challenges will allow you to show off. Love is in the stars. *****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't procrastinate when it comes to home or personal improvements. You have to set your goals and stick to your budget and plans if you want to avoid being criticized. Stick to quality over quantity; less will turn out to be the better choice. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put love first. Nurture both personal and professional partnerships. How you treat others will determine your success. Consideration and moderation will be key when it comes to getting along with others. Use creativity and imagination to prosper. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Welcome change with positive reinforcement. Putting up a fight will lead to confusion and controversy. You will learn by watching how others handle adversity. If you need to use force to get your way, it probably isn't worth your while. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Put your heart into home, family and important relationships. The potential to make a good investment is apparent. Look at your assets and liabilities and make positive and prosperous changes. Love is highlighted, and romance will enhance your life. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Relationships will be tested, and discipline will be required to avoid criticism. Be willing to make changes in order to keep the peace and you will win favors and support when needed. Compromise and patience will lead to victory. **

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Reassess your situation, friendships and partnerships before making a decision. Rely on experience to help you make the best choice. Love and romance are highlighted. Embrace the love of your life, reconnect with someone special or search for someone new. ****

Birthday Baby: You are unpredictable, hard-working and intent on reaching your life goals.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

		9		5			7	
2	3			6	7		1	5
			6	2		3		
	6			8		4		
3	2						6	1
		4		2			5	
		2			9	1		
1	5		7	3			4	2
	4			1			9	

Difficulty Level ★ 3/26

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

2	5	1	4	6	7	3	9	8
9	6	7	1	3	8	5	4	2
8	4	3	9	2	5	6	7	1
6	8	2	7	9	3	4	1	5
7	3	4	6	5	1	8	2	9
1	9	5	8	4	2	7	3	6
5	2	8	3	7	9	1	6	4
4	7	9	5	1	6	2	8	3
3	1	6	2	8	4	9	5	7

Difficulty Level **** 3/26

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DEPARTMENT STORES Solution: 7 letters

Y M X D E P O T S T A P L E S
S T A X S M A S A W B A S C O
R B R N A I O R A O F L S B N
E U G E D M G H R O L E A D E
H C Y E B E J D O M L R R I E
T K M M T I E T I A N E S X R
O L B A J R L C D N S L Y I G
R E O R S O H G O S J E C E L
B K R W C A N R S U C R A M A
S M E K E I D E O O P A M N W
K A E L M S G K S D E P E A S
O R S O T U P T B R N P S M T
O T O R E O C U R O N A T I A
R L O S H O L R O L Y A T E G
B M S S S C A M E R I C A N E

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American, Ames, Apparel, Barn, Basco, Blair, Bloomingdale's, Borders, Brooks Brothers, Buckle, Club, Costco, Depot, Dixie, Dress, Footlocker, Guess, Gymboree, Home, JC Penny, Jones, K-Mart, Liberty, Lord, Lowe's, Macy's, Mande, Marcus, Media, Michaels, Neiman, Nordstrom, Rona, Ross, Sam's, Shopko, Stage, Staples, Target, Taylor, T.J. Maxx, Walgreen

Last Saturday's Answer: Jubilee

Words: THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD (volumes 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000)

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(5) WAITRESS
QUALIFICATIONS:
A) At least 21-25 years old with pleasing personality.
B) Has at least 2-3 years experience as a waitress in a Night Bar or an Entertainment Business.
C) Full Time with flexible working hours.
D) Salary: \$5.05/hr
E) Preferably can speak Japanese language fluently.
PLEASE MAIL YOUR RESUME to PMB 697 Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950 or contact our Office at Tel. (670) 233-1545 between 2:30PM - 9:00PM

JAPAN ENTERPRISES CORPORATION
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
(5) WAITRESS
QUALIFICATIONS:
A) At least 21-25 years old with pleasing personality.
B) Has at least 2-3 years experience as a waitress in a Night Bar or an Entertainment Business.
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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$27
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• 5-Liner with picture	\$36	\$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.



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Ohio State stuns Syracuse to reach Final 4



BOSTON (AP)—Ohio State coach Thad Matta sized up his team in the middle of the season and had it figured for an early loss when the NCAA tournament came around.

The final weekend of March Madness is next, and the Buckeyes will be there.

Jared Sullinger recovered from first-half foul trouble to score 19 points and grab seven rebounds, helping Ohio State beat top-seeded Syracuse 77-70 on Saturday to advance to the Final Four in New Orleans. The second-seeded Buckeyes will play the winner of Sunday's Midwest Regional final between North Carolina and Kansas.

"We're not going down to New Orleans for a vacation. It's a business trip," said Sullinger, who picked up his second foul 6 minutes into the game and did not return the rest of the half. "These guys have played without me before, so they know what they have to do."

Deshaun Thomas scored 14 with nine rebounds for Ohio State (31-7), which led by eight points with 59 seconds to play and held on after the Orange cut it to three. The Buckeyes made 13 of 14 free throws in the final 68 seconds and 31 of 42 from the line in all.

Ohio State is making its first trip to the Final Four since 2007, when it lost in the national championship game to Florida. They had lost in the regional semifinals in each of the past two seasons, and Matta wasn't even sure they would make it that far after a series of unimpressive practices.

When the Buckeyes, who spent five weeks as the No. 2 team in the nation, closed out February with three defeats in five games - including a home loss to Wisconsin on Feb. 26 - Matta had more reason to worry.

But he got the response he was hoping for.

"That loss opened their eyes and said, 'Hey, maybe we're not as good as we think we are,'" Matta said. "Maybe it got us pointed in the right direction."

Brandon Triche scored 15 points and Baye Keita had 10 rebounds for Syracuse (34-3). The Orange were hoping for a return trip to New Orleans, where they won their only national championship in 2003.



Syracuse forward Kris Joseph, left, and center Baye Keita (12) can't stop Ohio State center Amir Williams (23) as he dunks during the first half of the East Regional final game in the NCAA men's college basketball tournament, Saturday, March 24, 2012, in Boston. Ohio State won, 77-70.

In a tightly officiated game that left Sullinger on the bench in foul trouble for most of the first half and Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim not-quite muzzled after picking up a technical foul, it came down to free throws. Syracuse was called for 29 fouls - its most in more than three years - despite playing its usual 2-3 zone.

Boeheim didn't like several of them. He picked up a technical for objecting to a foul in the first half, and he escaped another in the second half despite shouting his profane complaint across the court. At one point, he turned to Jeff Hathaway, the chairman of the NCAA selection committee who was

sitting near the Syracuse bench, and made his case in person.

Afterward, Boeheim gave a terse "No comment" when asked if the officials hurt the flow of the game. A statement from the officiating crew chief said Boeheim was given a technical for being out of the coaching box and gesturing about a call.

"We're not going to blame it on the refs," said guard Scoop Jardine, who had 14 points and six assists. "I think we had a chance to win the game no matter what, with the refs or without them giving us any calls."

The Orange went to the line 25 times, making 20 foul shots.

The frequent whistles left both teams struggling to get into a groove in the first half - there were only four baskets in the last 9:30. That seemed to be good

news for Ohio State, which managed to stay with the No. 1 seed despite getting only 6 minutes from Sullinger, the star of the Buckeyes' East Regional semifinal win over Cincinnati.

Louisville 72, Florida 68

In Phoenix, once upon a time, Billy Donovan took Rick Pitino on an improbable ride to the Final Four.

Twenty-five years later, Pitino is heading back after another unbelievable run - one capped with an amazing late-game rally that left his old protege wondering what the heck happened.

Freshman forward Chane Behanan made the go-ahead basket with 1:06 left Saturday and Pitino's fourth-seeded Louisville Cardinals outscored Florida by 15 points over the final 10 minutes for a 72-68 victory in the West

Regional final.

And all Pitino could think afterward was, "Hate to do that to ya, kid."

"Tonight, it was very difficult because of the way the game ended, because they outplayed us for 32 minutes," Pitino said. "And it really hurt inside. As much as I felt like celebrating, it really hurt because he did such a masterful job of coaching."

Russ Smith, who finished with 19 points, followed Behanan's bucket with a pair of free throws and then Florida freshman Bradley Beal and teammate Kenny Boynton each missed chances to tie in the final seconds.

Louisville made one more free throw to seal the game and reach its ninth Final Four, the second under Pitino, despite playing the final 3:58 without point guard Peyton Siva, who fouled out.

Seventh-seeded Florida (26-11) went out in the regional final for the second straight year, with Donovan falling to 0-7 lifetime against the man who coached him on that Final Four team at Providence in 1987, hired him as an assistant at Kentucky a few years later and felt as proud as a papa when he watched Donovan win his two national titles in 2006 and 2007.

"I said this earlier, for myself, I don't think any of us like losing," Donovan said. "But if someone said to me, 'You have to lose a game, who would it be to?' I would say him."

Louisville will take an eight-game winning streak on its trip New Orleans. Awaiting is a possible matchup with Pitino's old school, Kentucky, which will have to get by Baylor on Sunday to set up a grudge match to end them all.

"We think they're excellent. We think they're great. I coached there. It's great. Great tradition," Pitino said. "But we want to be Louisville. We have a different mission. They have a different mission. But we both want to get to a Final Four and win a championship."

This game had a much more warm-and-fuzzy story line than that possible Bluegrass State matchup - a meeting between two men who say theirs is more of a father-son relationship than anything else.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—So much for the domination U.S. coach Caleb Porter wanted out of the Americans.

Doneil Henry and Lucas Cavallini each scored goals as Canada beat the United States 2-0 Saturday night for its first win over the Americans since 1992 in the CONCACAF men's Olympic qualifying tournament.

Now the Americans must beat El Salvador on Monday night to advance to the semifinals in Kansas City, Kan., or miss out on an Olympic qualifying berth for the first time since 2004 and only the second since 1976.

"This isn't the end of the world," said Porter who came in talking of winning all three games in this round-robin Group A tournament. "This is not the way we wanted it to play out. But everything is still in our hands. We beat El Salvador, and then we're through."

Even a win could put the U.S. Under-23 team playing Mexico in the semifinals, the team that eliminated the Americans 4-0 in 2004. Not advancing to the semifinals would follow the Americans failing to qualify last year for the Under-20 World Cup.

US loses to Canada in Olympic qualifier

Porter downplayed this loss.

"It's abnormal to be through in the first two games on six points, so in some ways this is more atypical going into the third game," Porter said. "This is the game that decides our destiny."

A win against Canada would have clinched the Americans a berth in the semifinals on March 31 where those winners qualify for the London games. Instead, they now must beat El Salvador, a 4-0 winner over Cuba earlier Saturday, on Monday night to advance. Canada will play winless Cuba in the other game.

"Obviously, we're not happy about today, but nothing we can do but go win the next game to get through to the semis," midfielder Brek Shea said.

The Americans came in 4-1-2 all-time against Canada in this tournament, but the Canadians finished with a win big enough coach Tony Fonseca said may wake up folks at home. Philippe Davies, who had assists on both goals, said not many people believed in them in this game.

"Being in America and we go there and beat them 2-0, it's great," Davies said. "We weren't afraid to play, we went at them, we created some chances. We had a really good second half."

The Canadians played a scoreless tie against El Salvador to open this tournament, and they stayed just as strong defensively against the Americans by stacking what Porter called a "Christmas tree" in the middle with a 4-3-2-1 alignment. Fonseca also had a fresh lineup using seven new players, saying he brought 20 players into the game.

"And I'm going to use them," Fonseca said.

Porter said that alignment basically is used to shut down a team, and his squad couldn't convert off passes when they had their chances.

Henry headed the ball off a corner kick in the 58th minute, and Cavallini scored off a diving header in the 83rd minute for a 2-0 lead.

The U.S. squad played without Juan Agudelo, who U.S. Soccer officials an-

nounced before the game tore cartilage in his left knee in Thursday night's 6-0 win over Cuba and the forward will re-join the New York Red Bulls on Sunday with team doctors figuring out a recovery timetable. Agudelo, who scored a goal Thursday night, watched from the bench.

Porter will not be able to replace Agudelo on the roster since the Americans still have 19 players available and must get to 18 before an injury replacement is allowed.

Teal Bunbury, whose father played for the Canadian national team, got the start along with Jorge Villafana as they replaced Kofi Sarkodie and Agudelo.

The teams played to a scoreless first half, and Porter substituted Joe Gyau for Joe Corona, who had three goals in Thursday night's 6-0 win over Cuba. Terrence Boyd substituted for Bunbury in the 56th minute.

The Americans thought they had gone ahead in the 48th minute when Ike Opara headed a Freddy Adu free kick into the goal. But Opara was

called offsides.

Porter said the Americans never really got into rhythm and created most of their chances when they went wide and ran in. The U.S. did have a 10-9 edge on Canada on goal attempts, though Canada had a 5-4 difference in shots on target. Porter said the U.S. needed that first goal.

"It played out perfect for them to get the first goal on a set piece. Now they can sit it even more," Porter said.

"We get the first goal, they open up, the whole game's different. We had looks in the first half to get the first goal, we had looks in the second half to get the first goal. But we just didn't find it. We've all seen this game a thousand times where a team sits in, pinches a goal and hangs on."

They had a great chance to tie it up when Villafana found Adu for a kick on goal only to have keeper Michal Misiewicz deflect it and smother the ball. After the referee gave a yellow card to Canadian Andres Fresenga for wasting time on the ground in the 66th minute, the U.S. had another chance. But Shea's kick banged off the side of the net.

Deng buzzer-beater gives Bulls 40th victory



CHICAGO (AP)—Luol Deng hit a follow-up shot at the buzzer in overtime and the Chicago Bulls beat the Toronto Raptors 102-101 on Saturday night for their NBA-leading 40th victory.

Chicago's C.J. Watson drove for the basket and Toronto's James Johnson blocked the attempt, but Deng got the ball and put it in the basket—a play officials reviewed to make sure it was in before the buzzer.

Carlos Boozer had 24 points and 10 rebounds for the Bulls, Deng added 23 points and 10 rebounds, and Watson had 23 points.

Johnson, a former Chicagao player, scored 20 points for Toronto. Jose Calderon also had 20 points and 10 assists, and Gary Forbes had 12 points and 13 rebounds for the Raptors, but missed two free throws with 6.4 seconds left in overtime.

Knicks 101, Pistons 79

In New York, Tyson Chandler had 15 points and tied a season high with 17 rebounds, and New York rebounded from its first loss under Mike Woodson to rout Detroit for the third time this season.

Amare Stoudemire scored 17 points for the Knicks, who are 6-1 since Mike D'Antoni resigned. They lost 96-79 on Friday night in Toronto, but had no trouble with Detroit for the third time in three meetings this season.

Carmelo Anthony finally got his shot to fall in the third quarter and finished with 15 points, while Jeremy Lin had 13. The bench put it away early in the fourth, allowing some banged-up Knicks to get some extra rest. Lin sat down with a sore left knee but could have returned, while Stoudemire went out with a sore lower back and the Knicks said at the time his return was questionable.

Ben Gordon scored 20 points for Detroit, which lost its fifth straight.

Clippers 101, Grizzlies 85

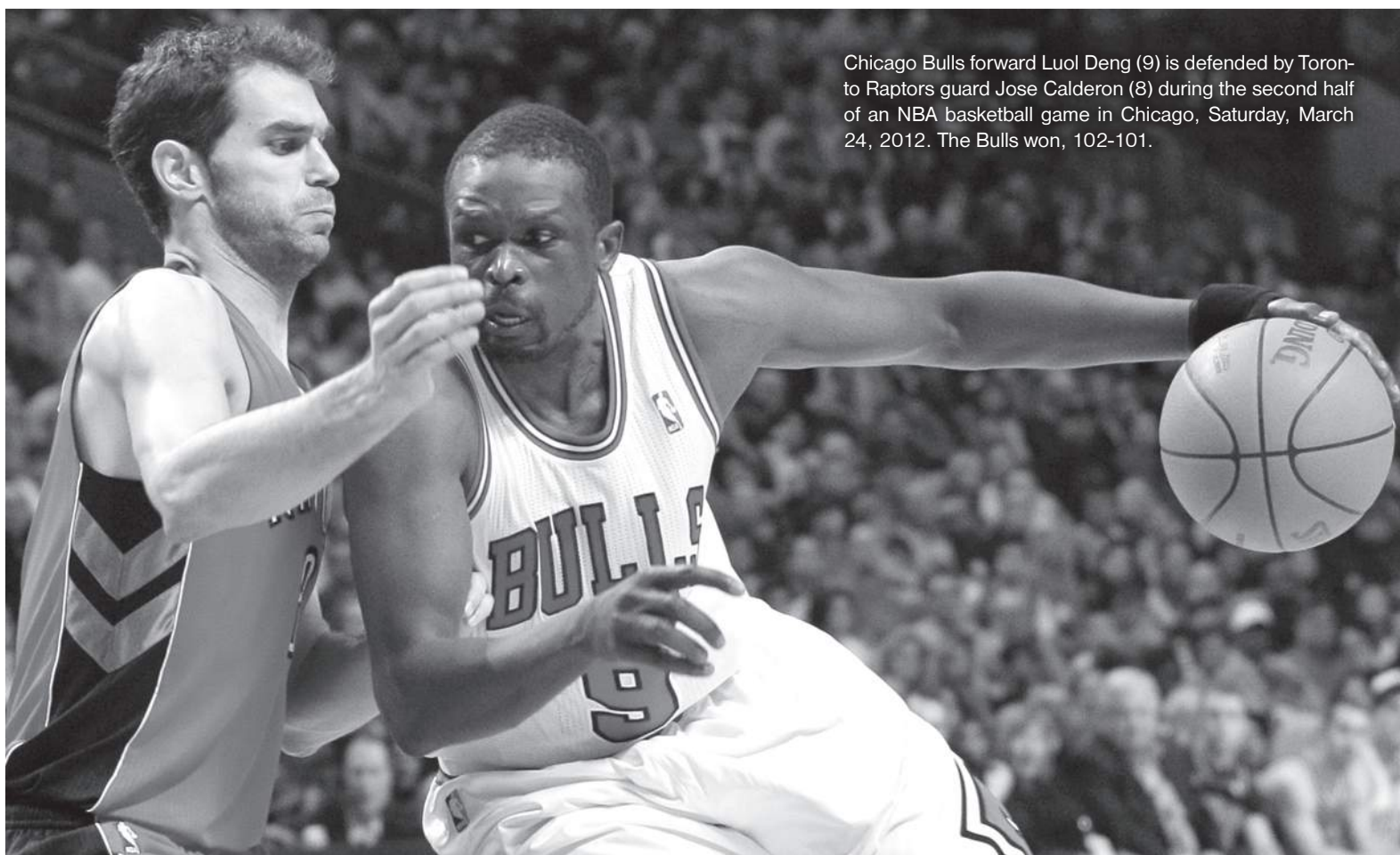
In Los Angeles, Blake Griffin had 20 points and 10 rebounds, Chris Paul added 19 points and 13 assists, and Los Angeles beat Memphis to end its first three-game losing streak of the season.

Randy Foye had 18 points to help the Clippers, playing the first of five home games in eight days, move within three games of the Lakers for the Pacific Division lead.

Zach Randolph had 14 points and eight rebounds for Memphis. The Grizzlies have lost six of eight after an 11-2 stretch.

Spurs 89, Hornets 86

In New Orleans, DeJuan Blair scored 23 points and Tim Duncan had four key points down the stretch in the San Antonio's victory over short-handed New Orleans.,



Chicago Bulls forward Luol Deng (9) is defended by Toronto Raptors guard Jose Calderon (8) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Chicago, Saturday, March 24, 2012. The Bulls won, 102-101.

The Spurs, chasing Oklahoma City for the best record in the Western Conference, trailed by a point twice in the final 2 minutes. Duncan responded each time, atoning for a lackluster game by making two free throws and tipping in a missed shot with 1:19 left to give San Antonio the lead for good.

Jarrett Jack had 27 points for the Hornets, 25 in the first three quarters. He also committed a turnover and missed a driving layup in the final 32.7 seconds. Duncan finished with 13 points and seven rebounds.

Hawks 95, Wizards 92

In Washington, Joe Johnson scored nine of his 16 points in the fourth quarter, including a go-ahead 3-pointer in the final minute, and Atlanta erased a 16-point deficit to beat Washington.

Josh Smith added 20 points and nine rebounds to help the Hawks win their third consecutive game.

Nene led the Wizards with 21 points and 11 rebounds for his 80th career double-double, and Jordan Crawford scored 20 points. Washington's John Wall missed a potential tying 3-pointer right before the buzzer.

Mavericks 101, Rockets 99, OT

In Houston, Dirk Nowitzki scored 31 points, Ja-

son Terry added 24 and Brandan Wright had a career-high seven blocks in Dallas' overtime victory over Houston.

Shawn Marion had 12 points and a season-high 15 rebounds to help the Mavericks beat Houston for the fifth straight time. Goran Dragic scored 24 points, and Luis Scola added 19 for the Rockets.

The game had 17 lead changes, 15 ties and a louder-than-usual crowd with the in-state rival in town.

Pacers 125, Bucks 104

In Milwaukee, George Hill scored a season-high 24 points in Indiana's victory over Milwaukee.

Roy Hibbert added 16 points and nine rebounds to help the Pacers rebound from a home loss to Phoenix.

Ersan Ilyasova had 22 points and eight rebounds for the Bucks. Monta Ellis, Milwaukee's recent trade acquisition, scored 11 points, struggling after scoring nine in the first quarter.

The game included a minor confrontation in the fourth quarter between Milwaukee's Mike Dunleavy, a former Pacers player, and Indiana's Tyler Hansbrough.

Warrios 111, Kings 108

In Oakland, David Lee had 22 points, 14 re-

bounds and nine assists and rookie Klay Thompson scored a career-best 31 points to lead short-handed Golden State past Sacramento.

Two turnovers by the Kings and another by the Warriors in the final minute finished off a sloppy game and handed Golden State the season series 3-1 in the Northern California rivalry. Thompson's previous career high of 27 points came three days earlier in a win at New Orleans.

DeMarcus Cousins had 28 points and 18 rebounds for the Kings.

Nets 102, Bobcats 89

In Newark, Deron Williams had 19 points and matched his season high with 14 assists and New Jersey beat Charlotte to snap a five-game losing streak.

Kris Humphries added 20 points and 16 rebounds, and former Bobcat Gerald Wallace had 15 points to help the Nets sweep the four-game season series with the woeful Bobcats.

Backup center Byron Mullens had 17 points to lead the Bobcats, who were coached by assistant coach Stephen Silas. Head coach Paul Silas has handed the team over to his son for three full games this season.



ORLANDO, Fla.

(AP)—One swing cost Tiger Woods a comfortable lead at Bay Hill. All that mattered to him was his name

atop the leaderboard at the end of the day, leaving him one round away from winning on the PGA Tour for the first time in 30 months.

If anything, Saturday showed that it won't be easy in the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

In two holes, Woods went from a four-shot lead to briefly tied with Graeme McDowell after a bizarre chain of events that featured a young man passing out and a woman screaming, all in the middle of Woods' swing on the 15th tee.

But he followed the double bogey with a birdie from a fairway bunker on the par-5 16th to restore his lead, and then hung on for a 1-under 71 that gave him a one-shot lead over McDowell going into the final round.

Woods takes 1-shot lead at Bay Hill

McDowell didn't make a birdie until the 17th hole, but he was bogey-free on a tough day for a 71.

Woods is 37-2 when he has the outright lead going into the final round, and Sunday will show if he has regained his status as the most formidable closer in golf.

Woods, who was at 11-under 205, last won on the PGA Tour on Sept. 13, 2009, at the BMW Championship. That also was the last time he had the outright lead at a PGA Tour event after 54 holes.

He has never had a better chance to end the drought than now - in the lead and on a course where he has won a record six times.

"I enjoy it," Woods said of his place atop the leaderboard. "It means I've played well to get there. It's not like I'm slashing it all over the place and happened to be at 11-under par. If

you're in the lead, you've done some good things. That's how I've always looked at it, and it's a nice position to be in."

Woods has such control of his golf ball that he went 38 consecutive holes with a putter in his hand for a birdie attempt.

The last time Woods and McDowell played in the final group of any tournament, McDowell rallied from four shots behind and beat Woods in a play-off in the Chevron World Challenge at the end of 2010.

"The golf course is going to be the main competitor tomorrow," McDowell said.

Indeed, it might not be just them.

Ernie Els rekindled his hopes of getting into the Masters with six birdies in a round of 67 that left him only three shots behind. Ian Poulter had a 68 and also was tied for third, while Charles

Howell III (68) and Sony Open winner Johnson Wagner (69) were four behind.

Els played the opening two rounds with Woods and didn't get much out of his game. That changed Saturday during a strong run up the leaderboard that at least gave him a reasonable chance to get into the Masters - and possibly win Bay Hill for the third time.

The Big Easy is at No. 62 in the world and needs to crack the top 50 after Sunday to get an invitation to Augusta. He could get there by finishing alone in third place - provided Matteo Manassero doesn't win in Morocco on the European Tour, or Howell doesn't finish alone in second place at Bay Hill.

It gets complicated with the world ranking, even without a calculator. Els hasn't even bothered to do the math.

"I know I've got to finish ... really, almost winning. I've got to almost win, or something like that," Els said. "But

if I'm in, I'm in. And if I'm not, I'm just glad my game is coming around. Whatever happens, I feel like I can have a good year now. I feel like the hard work is starting to pay off."

Els rolled in a 30-foot birdie putt on the ninth hole for a 32 on the front, getting him into the picture. His lone lapse came on the 15th, and he did well to escape with bogey. His ball was sitting slightly down in a fairway bunker, and Els hit the lip with his approach, the ball coming back into the sand. He blasted the next out onto the green and two-putted.

But he birdied the 16th, got up-and-down from a front bunker on the 17th, and knocked in a 15-foot birdie on the 18th. Even then, he was five shots behind against Woods, his longtime nemesis and a six-time at Bay Hill.

"I don't want to talk too badly about Tiger, but hope he makes a couple of bogeys and I have a bit of a chance tomorrow," Els said.

He laughed, and he got his wish.

BUCHER

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crown she lost to U.S. pro Shonny Vanlandingham last year.

“Last year was one of the saddest days in my life, as a I lost the race (XTERRA Saipan) that meant a lot to me. I waited for one whole year to get through with that feeling and I am very happy I was able to win my favorite race in XTERRA Tour,” said Bucher, who incidentally started her triathlon career in 2005 on Saipan and won the Crown Jewel for six straight years before losing it last year.

The 34-year-old Bucher crossed the finish line with her hands up—five fingers on her right hand up and two on the left—signaling her seventh XTERRA Saipan win and 24th overall on the 24th day of March.

“It was an amazing feeling, as I did not only regain the women’s crown, but also completed the Triple Crown on the island that has a special place in my heart,” added Bucher, who also won XTERRA Guam and the

Philippines.

Duplicating Bucher’s feat was Australia’s Ben Allen, who set the second fastest time in XTERRA Saipan at 2:31:05, behind the 2:27:16 (2007) of Olivier Marceau, who returned here after missing the race for four years, but failed to reclaim his crown as he came in 41 seconds behind Allen.

“I am on top of the world, winning three XTERRA races week after week is tough and it helped a lot that a I trained very hard in the past two months in Australia to get into top shape,” said Allen, a first timer in XTERRA Saipan and only on his second year in XTERRA Tour.

Rough start

The swim leg started a bit later as organizers took time deciding which way to begin the race and then when swimmers dove into the waters Micro Beach (right side of the beach), strong current greeted the triathletes.

“The swim was very challenging. The current was a bit strong and the water was choppy. But, it was what I wanted,

awards host Wolf Mojica, and former president Bill Sakovich.

“On behalf of XTERRA, we would like to thank all the athletes for supporting the Triple Crown. We hope to see you again next year, as we look for bigger and tougher races in Guam, the Philippines, and Saipan,” Garman said.

XTERRA Guam was held on March 10 and it was the first time that the race was considered as a championship where XTERRA World slots were

I love swimming in that condition,” said Allen, who was first out of the water at the 22:00 mark, more than a minute ahead of Marceau (23:46). Eventual seventh placer Branden Rakita was second out of the water with his 23:39.

Female pro runner-up Jacqui Slack (3:04:46) beat Bucher for the third time in the swim leg, clocking in at 25:13, more than three minutes ahead of the latter (28:18). Saipan pro Miekko Carey was the second female out of the water, submitting 26:48.

“I knew that will happen so I prepared myself to catch up with her in the bike leg,” Bucher said.

Neck-and-neck bike race

Allen, Marceau, and eventual third placer Cedric Lassonde (2:34:58) were at it in the brutal bike race and had only about one minute separating them as they headed up to the dreaded climb at Mt. Tapochao. Marceau was first up the backside of the island’s landmark, followed by Marceau, and Lassonde. Then heading to the

given. The Philippines had its second championship, while Saipan had the richest history among the three with the staging of the 11th edition of XTERRA’s Crown Jewel.

Mojica during the awards ceremony announced that they are now coordinating with Team Unlimited for next year’s race and encouraged first timers in last Saturday’s race to invite their fellow athletes and return for the 2013 XTERRA Saipan.

At this early, Bucher and Al-

dangerous downhill, coral road at Navy Hill, Lassonde had overtaken Marceau, while fourth place Takahiro Ogasawara of Japan stayed close to the lead group.

Lassonde was the fastest in the bike race at 1:22:28, but his swim time of 25:56 left him at third, heading to the run leg. Marceau remained at second place after submitting 1:24:19 in the bike leg, while Allen timed in at 1:25:33 to remain in the lead, but was just 33 seconds ahead of the former.

Slack had the lead in the bike leg, going up to Navy Hill and to the first few climbs at Mt. Tapochao. However, Bucher grabbed the driver’s seat in the last long tricky climb to the highest peak on the island and made it to the bike-run transition area in Micro Beach with a time of 1:34:12. Slack logged 1:40:43, giving Bucher about five minutes lead heading to the last phase of the race.

Lead change

Marceau gave Allen quite a scare at the halfway mark of the run leg when the two triathlets en-

len had already committed to defend their titles next year.

“As long as I can race, I will come back on Saipan,” Bucher said.

“I’d love to return next year and defend my title. This is an amazing race,” Allen said.

Over 100 athletes joined last weekend’s XTERRA Saipan and except for the strong current during the swim leg, majority of the participants agreed they raced in an almost perfect condition.

JD Pangelinan swung 4-for-5 with two RBIs and two runs; Iguel batted 3-for-4 with three RBIs, three runs and a base on balls; Fejeran went 2-for-4 with three RBIs and a run; and the Braves’ Andres Camacho batted 2-for-3 with an RBI.

Enforcers 16, McDonald’s 4

Some McDonald’s pitching woes early in the game allowed the Enforcers to score nine runs.

Then Enforcers’ Kier Agda led off the bottom of the second with a single and scored soon after a wild pitch. Shakobe Rangamar reached on a fielder’s choice and was driven home by Korey Leon, who made it home later off an error. The Enforcers knocked their second pitcher off the mound mid-way through the frame.

McDonald’s managed only runs against Enforcers hurler Travis Camacho. It mustered two runs to start the match and then a run in the second and third frames before sputtering out in the final stand.

Meanwhile, the Enforcers poured on four more runs in the third inning as they cruised to the easy win. Camacho gave up three earned runs off two hits, seven walks, and a bean ball with seven strikeouts in four innings.

Agda batted 2-for-2 with three runs, three stolen bases, and a base on balls.

tered the jungle at Navy Hill and negotiated the slippery and sharp ravines en route to the famous World War II tunnels.

“Olivier was flying. You could tell from every step he takes that he knows his way out of the technical part of the course. I had to keep up with him to have a chance when we hit the road,” said Allen.

Marceau managed to grab the lead from Allen after they went out of the tunnel and headed to more ravines, but the Australian regained control when they were out of the trail and started running along the Sugar King road.

In the women’s division, Bucher went to Anak’s trail just less than a minute earlier than Slack. However, Bucher gained momentum on their way to the tunnels and ravines.

“I knew I have the advantage in the ravines/tunnels trail, as Jacqui is used to running on the road. The trail run is my favorite, it’s very technical and I am used to it after coming here for the past seven straight years,” said Bucher, who came out of the jungle with over eight minutes lead and eventually won by about 10 minutes against Slack.

Gallant stand

Austrian pro Carina Wasle, who stunned Bucher in last year’s XTERRA, coming in at second behind Vanlandingham, this time finished at third place, completing the race at the 3:05:53 despite

a crash early in the bike race.

Heading down to the bike trail at Navy Hill, the diminutive triathlete crashed into another biker. The Saipan biker was trying to move out of Wasle’s way, but run out of time, and the latter fell on the ground and had her right leg hit the crank of the former’s bike. Wasle sustained a deep cut about three inches long and was dizzy after the fall.

Despite her condition, Wasle through the help of the Saipan biker got up and chased the leaders. Wasle managed to overtake Carey on the way up Mt. Tapochao and timed in at 1:47:11. Carey also had her misfortunes in the bike leg, as she had two flat tires and ended up posting 1:50:21.

Wounded and wobbly, Wasle soldiered on in the run leg and even recorded the fastest time in the women’s division at 55:54. Bucher timed in at 58:37, while Slack had 1:04:08. The brave Austrian pro ate up Slack’s nine-minute lead and was less than 100m away from the finish line and a few feet ahead of the latter when fatigue took its toll on the former.

Wasle suddenly stopped near the pavilion at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, as she cramped up. With the crowd egging her to move on, the teary-eyed Wasle walked her way to the loop and Bucher and Slack hugged her at the finish line.

“I thought of quitting a lot of times, but I just couldn’t,” said Wasle.

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pan’s Takahiro Ogasawara and Yoshimi Yasui, Austria’s Carina Wasle, (JPN), Canada’s Chuck Fortier, and Guam’s Gabe Lombard, Mark Cruz, Tobias Theisen, and Rick Leone.

Trey Garman of Team Unlimited, which owns and produces XTERRA, presented the 16 triathletes with medals and was assisted by Taga, Inc. president and

LITTLE

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batted 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run for IT&E.

In other results, the San Vicente A’s defeated the As Matuis Twins, 6-2 on Sunday; while on Saturday, the IT&E Ol’Aces bested the Bank of Saipan Red Sox, 7-3; the Rep. Joseph P. Guerrero Dandan Comets routed ITE, 12-2; the Natibu Sports Association Tanapag Falcons pelted the Natibu Tanapag Braves, 13-4; and last Thursday the DPS Dare Program JPO Enforcers rolled over McDonald’s, 16-4.

As of yesterday, the current standings show the Comets (7-0) atop the 12-team leader board and the only unbeaten team in the field. The Enforcers close behind in second with their 6-1 record.

The A’s are in third place with five wins and two losses, while the Twins (5-3), Pacific Amusement’s Rays (4-2), Ol’Aces (4-3), IT&E (4-4), Falcons (3-3), Red Sox (2-7), Braves (1-5), Little Legals (1-6), McDonald’s (0-5) fill in the rest of the order.

A’s 6, Twins 2

The A’s assumed control, 3-0, in the third inning. Nathan Nogis led off with a single and later stole the dish, while the other runs scored from errors.

The count shifted to 4-2, in

the fourth inning because of some wild pitching and infield bobbles from both teams. The A’s nailed up their last two runs in the top of the sixth off another error and an RBI single by Manny Villagomez.

Nogis batted 3-for-4 with three runs; Christian Lizama swung 3-for-3 with a run, two stolen bases, and a base on balls. Lizama also received he nod as the winning pitcher, allowing a pair of unearned runs off just two hits with six strikeouts through six innings.

Ol’Aces 7, Red Sox 3

The Ol’Aces overcame an early 1-2 deficit from the first two innings with three runs in the top of the fourth inning off some costly errors with two outs.

The Red Sox managed to get a run back in the bottom of the fifth from a wild pitch, but the Ol’Aces’ Virgil Secharmedal cranked a three-run homer to start the sixth and held strong on the mound for the final three outs. Jimmy Kaipat and Tyler Flores came around to the plate with him.

Secharmedal stepped to the rubber early in the second inning and notched 15 strikeouts. He gave up an unearned run off three hits in five innings.

Comets 12, IT&E 2

The Comets’ Aurel Mendiola led off with a solo home run in the

bottom of the first inning and his team piled on six more runs in the second frame off three hits, three walks and a couple fielder’s choices. Comets’ Edwin Cruz also stole home in the mix.

The Comets then threatened to end it early with four more runs in the third inning from some extra throws around the infield. They went on to add another run in the fourth inning from an RBI single by Mendiola and held IT&E to just two runs in the final stand.

Mendiola batted 4-for-4 with two RBIs, three runs, and two stolen bases.

Winning pitcher Erik Cruz came to the mound early in the first inning and went on to finish the game, giving up two runs off zero hits and seven walks with seven strikeouts in four innings.

Falcons 13, Braves 4

The Falcons drew first blood with three runs in the opening frame off a pair of two-RBI triples by Benen Iguel and Donny Fejeran and a double by Kekuni Kanoa.

The Falcons added four more runs in the second off a two-RBI base smash by Max Pangelinan and a pair of RBI singles by JD Pangelinan and Fejeran.

JD Pangelinan bagged another RBI single in the third and belted another runner home later in the sixth inning to set up an RBI double for Iguel.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES			
NBA STANDINGS			
EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Philadelphia	27	21	.563 —
Boston	25	22	.532 1 1/2
New York	24	25	.490 3 1/2
Toronto	16	33	.327 11 1/2
New Jersey	16	34	.320 12
Southeast Division			
Miami	35	11	.761 —
Orlando	31	18	.633 5 1/2
Atlanta	29	20	.592 7 1/2
Washington	11	36	.234 24 1/2
Charlotte	7	39	.152 28
Central Division			
x-Chicago	40	10	.800 —
Indiana	28	19	.596 10 1/2
Milwaukee	22	26	.458 17
Cleveland	17	28	.378 20 1/2
Detroit	16	32	.333 23
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Southwest Division			
San Antonio	32	14	.696 —
Dallas	28	22	.560 6
Memphis	25	21	.543 7
Houston	26	23	.531 7 1/2
New Orleans	12	36	.250 21
Northwest Division			
Oklahoma City	36	12	.750 —
Utah	26	22	.542 10
Denver	26	22	.542 10
Minnesota	23	26	.469 13 1/2
Portland	22	26	.458 14
Pacific Division			
L.A. Lakers	30	18	.625 —
L.A. Clippers	27	21	.563 3
Phoenix	24	24	.500 6
Golden State	20	26	.435 9
Sacramento	17	31	.354 13
x-clinched playoff spot			
Yesterday's Games			
L.A. Clippers 101, Memphis 85			
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS			

Atlanta 95, Washington 92
New Jersey 102, Charlotte 89
New York 101, Detroit 79
Chicago 102, Toronto 101, OT
Dallas 101, Houston 99, OT
San Antonio 89, New Orleans 86
Indiana 125, Milwaukee 104
Golden State 111, Sacramento 108

ARNOLD PALMER INVITATIONAL SCORES

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Scores Saturday from the Arnold Palmer Invitational, a US PGA Tour event on the 7,419-yard, par-72 Bay Hill Club and Lodge Course:

Third Round		
Tiger Woods	69-65-71	—205
Graeme McDowell	72-63-71	—206
Ernie Els	71-70-67	—208
Ian Poulter	71-69-68	—208
Charles Howell III	73-68-68	—209
Johnson Wagner	71-69-69	—209
Kevin Na	73-68-69	—210
Charlie Wi	66-68-76	—210
Bud Cauley	70-73-68	—211
Sean O'Hair	69-72-70	—211
Zach Johnson	71-68-72	—211
Chris Stroud	70-69-72	—211
Bubba Watson	69-70-72	—211
Webb Simpson	73-66-73	—212
Justin Rose	69-69-74	—212
Jason Dufner	66-69-77	—212
Seung-Yul Noh	73-73-67	—213
Tim Herron	74-71-68	—213
Brian Davis	70-73-70	—213
Gary Woodland	75-68-70	—213
Trevor Immelman	73-69-71	—213
Ryan Moore	71-71-71	—213
K.J. Choi	69-72-72	—213
Marc Leishman	70-71-72	—213
Greg Owen	73-74-67	—214
Josh Teater	74-73-67	—214
Jim Furyk	72-72-70	—214
John Rollins	71-72-71	—214
Martin Laird	72-68-74	—214
Sergio Garcia	72-67-75	—214
Vijay Singh	71-68-75	—214
Henrik Stenson	72-74-69	—215
Jeff Overton	76-70-69	—215

The Week in Sports

Sports community welcomes visiting triathletes

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

Visiting triathletes started coming here last week for the 2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship, making the sports community busy with taking care of the island's guests.

Switzerland's Renata Bucher and Olivier Marceau, Australia's Ben Allen, United Kingdom's Graham Wadsworth and Jacqui Slack, France Cedric Lassonde, U.S.' Will Kelsay and Branden Rakita, Austria's Carina Wasle, and Japan's Takahiro Ogasawara were among the more than 20 visiting athletes on the island and competed in the last stop of the XTERRA Asia Tour's Triple Crown.

They went to pre-ride and run of the XTERRA Saipan course with local athletes and attended a couple of get-togethers before the actual race last Saturday.

While Saipan was busy preparing for XTERRA, other local competitions continued last week.

Northern Marianas Badminton Association had its championships games for the 2012 Tan Holdings Doubles Competition. In the men's division, Andreu Galvez and Rodwealth Espana won Class A, Oh Im Bog and Jexler Caranto topped Class B, and Son Jae Ok and Kim Young Seok ruled Class C. In the women's division, the champions list includes Class C's Midori Obi and Kazuko Sondheim, Class A's Loyda and Angie Ito, and Class B's Marylyn Montano and Cheng Saturno.

In football, Shirley's FC and Tan Holdings FC squared off in the girls U15 division of the NMIFA spring youth league at the Hopwood Junior High School Field, while over at the Oleai Sports Complex Field, the boys U15 and U18 teams also had their regular season games.

The NMIFA men's league is also being played at the Oleai pitch, and Week 2 of the competition saw Wild Bill's and MP United win against their respective



XTERRA Saipan participants wait for their pictures to be taken after a swim in the waters off Susupe last week.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Kagman Lions base runner Dave Matagolai is called safe at third base during their Senior League game against the Tanapag Falcons last week at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Tan Holdings FC player, right, dribbles while being defended by a Shirley's FC striker during their game in the girls U15 NMIFA youth league last week at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

March King of the Lanes winner Percy Omechelang is flanked by runners-up Robert Talavera, left, and Jon Eparwa.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

March Queen of the Lanes winner Diane Camacho, center, is joined by runners-up Gloria Omechelang, left, and Ron Cal in the awards presentation.




Far left, Jexter Caranto makes a return while teammate Oh Im Bog looks on during a game in the 2012 Tan Holdings Doubles Badminton Competition at the TSL Sports Complex.


ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Left, Marylyn Montano gets ready for a smash during a game in the 2012 Tan Holdings Doubles Badminton Competition at the TSL Sports Complex.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO




Activity Schedule for March 26, 2012





8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices


6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices



There are no scheduled games.







There are no scheduled games.



Ohio State stuns Syracuse to reach Final 4

24

Saipan Tribune Sports



Deng buzzer-beater gives Bulls 40th win

25

28 MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2012

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Bucher reclaims crown; Allen wins debut



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Australia's Ben Allen celebrates his first place finish in last Saturday's 2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Renata Bucher had her head down when she cut the tape last year, but last Saturday the Swiss pro exchanged high-fives with spectators, as she headed to the loop en route to the finish line of the 2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Switzerland's Renata Bucher gets high-fives from spectators en route to the finish line loop of last Saturday's 2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Bucher was the first female pro to complete the 1.5-kilometer swim, 32K bike, and 12K run race, timing in at 2:54:56 and regaining the

See **BUCHER** on Page 26

Little Legals break into win column

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



The Robert T. Torres Law Offices' Kagman Little Legals defeated IT&E,

8-5, at the continuation of the regular season of the Saipan Little League Baseball over the weekend at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Quinton Deleon Guerrero scored a pair of homers against IT&E to hand the Little Legals their first win in seven games.

The Little Legals surged ahead, 4-1, after finding life in the third inning.

They quickly loaded the bases off a pair of leadoff walks and an error that set up a pair of two RBI base



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

The Ol'Aces' Virgil Secharmedal fires home a pitch against the Bank of Saipan Red Sox during their Major League game last weekend at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Maratita. IT&E's run came from an RBI single by Steven Goodwin in the bottom frame.

Deleon Guerrero left the yard off a solo blast to start the fifth, but IT&E roared back to knot the game at 5-all in the bottom half of the inning off a pair of RBI base hits by John Auther and Elijah Villar and a two-RBI triple by Matt Kapileo.

The Little Legals were not discouraged however and struck back again in the top of the sixth with an RBI double by Jeffrey Castro that scored Jose Camacho and another two-run homer by Deleon Guerrero.

Little Legals starting pitcher Vincent Ogo remained steady on the mound and secured the win in the clutch. He gave up three earned runs off seven hits, three walks, and a hit batsman with seven strikeouts in six innings.

Deleon Guerrero batted 4-for-4 with five RBIs and one run. Auther

See **LITTLE** on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Carina Wasle (2) joins the group of swimmers heading to the waters off Micro Beach for the 1.5-kilometer swim leg of last Saturday's 2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

16 complete Triple Crown

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2012 XTERRA Saipan was the last top of XTERRA Tour Asia Pacific's Triple Crown and 16 triathletes were recognized in last Saturday's awards presentation for completing the trio of off-road races.

Leading the list of XTERRA

Triple Crown participants were three-peat champions Ben Allen of Australia and Renata Bucher of Switzerland. Joining them are Switzerland's Olivier Marceau, France's Cedric Lassonde, United Kingdom's Graham Wadsworth and Jacqui Slack, the U.S.'s Branden Rakita and Will Kelsay. Ja-

See 16 on Page 26